

T E N
DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED

In the PARISH-CHURCHES of

St *James, Clerkenwell,*

A N D

St *Ann and Agnes, Aldersgate.*

By *JOHN DOUGHTY*, M.A.

MINISTER of the former, and one of the Sunday
Evening LECTURERS of the latter Parish.

Brevis esse laboro.

HOR. *de Arte Poeticâ.*

Quæramus seria.

HOR. *Satyrarum Liber primus.*

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M D C C L X I.

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T H E
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I first designed the following SERMONS for the Press, I was not aware, that so much of them had been borrowed, (particularly as to one or two of them,) as, upon a closer Examination, I have since found. But however, as I am always very ready, and even pleased, to acknowledge myself indebted, where I know, or but think myself so, I have, for this Reason, prefixed the immediately following mark “to almost every thing (of any manner of Consequence as to length) which, as far as I can recollect, I believe to be not my own. If I

A 2

have

The P R E F A C E.

have so far done justice to the Quotations, as not to have quoted improperly, I shall be very well satisfied; and so, I hope, will others; but that must be left to the Judgment and Determination of every candid and impartial Reader.

One Thing I know, that they are wrote with a good Intent. And if only a few Families, (and it is hoped there may be many,) upon the Perusal of one of them, shall thereby be induced, with a decent, becoming Gravity, to beg a Blessing upon what they eat, (who had before neglected it,) and afterwards, with an humble Gratitude, be thankful for it, the Author runs no manner of Risque; he cannot miss his Aim; he is sure of being paid.

They

The PREFACE.

They are short; but, very probably, they may be liked the better for that. One Advantage will attend it; that where they are approved of, (if it should so happen that they are approved of at all,) they may be almost got by heart; and I am sure, where they are not, they would not be thought better, for being longer.

J. D.



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10 FEB 60



SERMON



S E R M O N I.

All dead in *Adam*, all alive
in CHRIST.



I C O R. XV. 22.

*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ
shall all be made alive.*



O sooner was our blessed SERM.
Saviour manifested in the I.
Flesh; no sooner had the
Angel ushered in the glad Tidings
of great Joy, but the Shepherds
with joyful Shouts proclaimed the
common Blessing of Mankind. A
Blessing, as far as we know, the
greatest that God himself could
give, or Man receive. Of such an
universal Extent, that all Mankind,
B every

SERM.

I.

every Son of *Adam*, all the Nations of the Earth, were to be compleatly happy in it. In the first place, *Glory to God on High*, in the next, *on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men*. All that was great and good; all that could advance the Glory of God, or contribute to the Good of Man, all this was evidently and unexceptionably the Purport of it. *Behold, I bring you good Tidings of great Joy which shall be to all People. For unto you is born in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.* A Saviour indeed; without whose Merits all Mankind must inevitably have perished. The Blood of Christ must wash away the Stain of Guilt; the Son of God must atone for the Sin of Man. In *Adam*, or by the Sin of *Adam*, all Mankind must necessarily have died; in Christ, or through the Merits of an all-sufficient interceding Saviour, all Mankind may now be made

made alive.---Thus much the Text SERM.
expressly asserts; and the Proof of I.
these two Propositions is to be the
Subject of the present Discourse. ---
First then, *In Adam*, or by the Sin
of *Adam*, all Mankind must neces-
sarily have died. ---

Man had sinned; and had so far
sinned, as to be of himself utterly
incapable of being ever happy. Nay,
he was sure to be for ever misera-
ble. For, he had rejected that
Happiness which God Almighty had
thought proper to offer him; he
had, in the basest manner, disobey-
ed that *one*, that *only one* Command
which God had given him a solemn
Injunction strictly to observe; in
direct, open Defiance of his Maker,
he had conspired with the Devil to
ruin Mankind.

--- Let us consider a little the
aggravating Nature of the Crime he
had been guilty of. It was “ not
“ only a bare Disobedience to the

SERM.

I.

“ divine Command, (though *that*
 “ would have been very bad) but
 “ it was likewise a perfect Infide-
 “ lity of his Promises and Threats*;
 “ it was a kind of Idolatry, to be-
 “ lieve the Devil, and to put a
 “ greater Trust in *him* than in God;
 “ a monstrous Pride, to desire to
 “ be equal with God, and such a
 “ diabolical Pride, as made the evil
 “ Angels fall from Heaven; Envy
 “ and Discontent, to think that
 “ God had denied him the Per-
 “ fections belonging to his Nature;
 “ Covetousness and Sacrilege, to de-
 “ fire and rob God of *that* which
 “ he had made holy to himself,
 “ in token of his Dominion and
 “ Sovereignty; strange and unac-
 “ countable Folly, to part with his
 “ Favour which is better than Life,
 “ for the trifling Pleasures of Taste
 “ and Curiosity; and one of the
 “ most barbarous Cruelties that ever
 was

* *Stackhouse's Body of Divinity, Page 282, 283.*

“ was committed, to destroy the SERM.
“ poor Souls of so many of his Off- I.
“ spring; to disinherit his Children,
“ even before they were born; and
“ doom them to Slavery before they
“ knew the Price of Liberty.” -----

Had not the Almighty given him a just Sense of his Duty in this Case; had he not endued him with Power sufficient to resist the Temptation; had it been owing to an Incapacity of reflecting upon the Nature of the Thing; or, had he been under an almost unavoidable *Necessity* of acting as he did, then indeed something might have been said for him; then perhaps, instead of being blamed, he might rather have been pitied. But, so far from this, he acted directly against the clearest Conviction of his own Conscience. His Mind was fully enlightened to discern what the Temptation was; it was also sufficiently fortified to decline it; he had no

SERM. outward Compulsion to oblige him,

I.

neither had he any inward Propensity in his Nature to induce him to it; so that really so provoking, because so inexcusable, was the Offence, that if God Almighty had been *extream to have marked what had been done amiss*, nothing less could have ensued than an universal Ruin; his whole Race must have been equal Sufferers with himself, for he acted *for them*, and they *in him*; so that all must have shared the same Fate. Consider the very great Obligations he was under to his Maker at this very time. He had not only breathed into him the Breath of Life; he had not only made him, but he at the same time made him Lord of the whole Creation. He *made him little lower than the Angels*, and it was with this Design, *to crown him with Glory and Worship*; he *made him to have Dominion of the Works of his Hands*,
and

Psal. cxxx.

3.

Psal. viii.

7, 8.

and he put all Things in Subjection SERM.
I.
under his Feet. *Sheep and Oxen;*

the Beasts of the Field; the Fowls of the Air, and the Fishes of the Sea, all were to be subject to Man's Direction; all were to be entirely at his Disposal. He was, during his Innocence, a kind of visible God upon Earth. — Had the Almighty proceeded with him in an *arbitrary* manner, had he confined him to a very narrow and *limited* Sphere; had he strictly charged him not to touch *any thing* in the Garden in the which he had placed him, then indeed his Crime might not have been so great, because his Temptation would have been much greater. But, this was by no means the Case; the Prohibition did not extend so far. The great and good Being, whom it was his Duty, and would have been his Happiness to have served, required nothing but what, with the strictest Justice, he

SERM. might reasonably have expected,
 I. and what, with the greatest Ease,
 Man might have performed. He
 placed him in a large, spacious, and
 pleasant Place, exquisitely adorned
 with all the Pleasures of the animal
 Life ; he gave him an absolute
 Right to, and a sole Command over
 every thing he had an Inclination
 to (one Tree only excepted ;) *Of*
every Tree in the Garden thou may-
est freely eat, but of the Tree of the
Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou
shalt not eat of it, for in the Day
that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt
surely die. Nothing could be plain-
 er than the Direction here given ;
 there was no room for an Excuse,
 no possibility of making one. Ac-
 cordingly, *Adam* was so sensible of
 his Crime, that immediately upon
 the Commission of it, he knew he
 was naked ; knew he had done,
 what he ought by no means to have
 done, and what nothing should have
 induced

Gen. ii.
 16, 17.

induced him to have done. The SERM.
 Consequence of which was, that *he* I.
bid himself; ashamed to see the Gen. iii.
 Face, or even hear the Voice of 10.
 that God whom he had so grossly
 abused. He did not indeed, (we
must say that for him) what too
 many *now* do, *glory* in his Shame,
 but, on the contrary, was so far
Good, as very submissively to own
 himself to have been *Bad*. *I heard*
thy Voice in the Garden and was
afraid; I knew that I had delibe-
 rately offended thee, and was there-
 fore afraid of appearing before thee.
 And well he might; for, though
 he had sufficiently experienced the
 Goodness of God in a State of In-
 nocence; though he had all the
 Reason in the World to look upon
 God as a Being compleat and per-
 fect in himself, and beyond Expres-
 sion good to *him*, yet, when he had
by Transgression fell, he might then Acts i. 25.
 easily guess how very much this
 must

SERM.

I.

must alter the State of the Case. In a State of Innocence there was no need of Mercy; God was then *Good*, and in the highest Degree so, but cannot properly be said to have been *merciful*; for then Man had done nothing to offend, and thereby to obstruct the Measures of Benevolence or creating Goodness. *Before* he sinned, he was like God; afterwards indeed like nothing but *himself*. As then he knew the Terms upon which he stood with his Maker, so must he necessarily be supposed to know what he must now in Justice expect from him. *If*

Gen. iv. 7. *thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the Door*: If you preserve your Integrity, you may depend upon being happy; if you forfeit it, you must take the Consequences of it. These, he well knew, were the very Terms to which he had readily agreed. In these

these Circumstances therefore he SERM.
I.
could have nothing to say for himself, no *one* thing to plead in his behalf. He knew that his God was enraged against him; and no Man ever *yet* was, or ever *will* be able to bear a Frown from offended Majesty. He must therefore, having nothing to say, which he had any Reason to think God would hear, necessarily plead Guilty, and stand Self-condemned. But we must not leave him here; let him be blamed, but let him be pitied; though indeed, if we well weigh the Matter, there seems to be no need of Pity, considering the unbounded Goodness, and exceeding, abundant Love of God, who, though he was resolved to punish the *Sinner*, was yet as fully determined to save the *Man*. How, and by what means, this Salvation was to be brought about, proceed we now in the second Place to consider.

“ Reason

SERM.

I.

“ Reason, unassisted, here entirely leaves us * ; *that* could never have found out a Mediator ; obnoxious Sinners could never have expected a Propitiation, had not God made the Overture of his Mercy, even before he had pronounced the Sentence of his Justice. *That* Overture was made in the gracious Promise of a Redeemer, appointed, before the Foundation of the World, in the Seed of the Woman ; that is, his own beloved Son assuming human Nature, and by the Sacrifice of himself vanquishing the Enemy, and atoning for the Sin of all Mankind.” — To enquire whether God in his infinite Wisdom could have contrived any *other* way of effecting Man’s Redemption ; whether the Assumption of the human Nature was *absolutely* necessary for the Remission of Sins, and the *only*

* *Stackhouse’s Body of Divinity, Page 530.*

only sufficient means of procuring SERM.
 a Reconciliation with God, would I.
 only be to satisfy a vain Curiosity,
 and to be wise above what is writ-
 ten. One thing we *may* and *ought*

to observe, which is, that a *more*
 effectual Method could never have
 been made choice of than this was,
 as on the one Hand, to shew God's
 extream Abhorrence of Sin, so on
 the other, to express the very great
 and tender Regard he had for Man.

Herein is Love, not that we loved 1 John iv.
God, but that he loved us, and sent 10.

his Son to be the Propitiation for
our Sins. — But to proceed regu-
 larly, and by *degrees* to bring about
 this great Event. — It has been al-
 ready observed, that Man had so far
 sinned, was so conscious of his Sin,
 and so very much ashamed of it,
 that he did not dare even to *appear*
 before God. He could therefore do
 nothing for *himself*; and there was
 no one living to do any thing for
 him.

SERM. him. He might look for some to
 I. have pity on him, but there was no

Pfal. lxix. Man, neither could he find any to
 21. comfort him. At this critical Junc-

ture, and in this distress of Circum-
 stances, nothing but Omnipotence
 could effect a Recovery; nothing
 less than infinite Goodness and Mer-
 cy could so much as have *thought*
 of it. The Offence was great; the
 Punishment due to it was to be in
 proportion; Man had sinned; Man
 must die. Who shall intercede for
 him? who, or where is he that shall
 undertake to deliver him, or make

Pfal. xlix. Atonement unto God for him? Who
 7. is, or can be sufficient for this great
 Task? No one less than the eter-
 nal Son of God, the only begotten
 of the Father. But *He* was the
 very Person against whom the Of-
 fence was committed, and shall *He*
 immediately turn Intercessor for the
 Offender? This were too much
 surely; much more than could have
 been

been expected; infinitely more indeed, than it could ever have entered into the Heart of *Man* to have conceived. But however, this was the Case; our blessed Saviour *did* make this gracious, free and voluntary Offer of himself; the Son of God came down from Heaven, became the Son of Man, and in order to deliver Man *abhorred not the Virgin's Womb*; it being necessary, as he was to *act* and *suffer* as Man, that he should likewise *appear* as Man. Accordingly, that he might compleatly finish the great Work he had undertaken to accomplish, he did readily consent to *take our Nature upon him, and to be born of a pure Virgin*. For thus was the only begotten brought into the World; he laid aside his Majesty and Omnipotence, *he bowed the Heavens and came down*. Angels themselves stood amazed at the wonderful Mystery, when they saw their great Lord and Master,

Psal. xviii.

SERM. Master, *Him* whom they had always
 I. been used to worship and obey, con-
 descend to appear in a Nature so much
 inferior to their own. It *might* be
 matter of *wonder*, but it was cer-
 tainly to such *good* Beings, matter of
 the greatest Joy. For now, the
 Covenant of Man's Redemption was
 entirely concluded. God the Father
 had approved of the Terms which
 God the Son had been pleased to
 propose; the one was to *make* a
 proper Satisfaction, the other had
 promised to *accept* of it as such. ---

We know that God is of *purser Eyes*
than to behold Iniquity with the least
 Approbation; it was therefore ab-
 solutely necessary, both for Man's
 " Security, and the greater Mani-
 " festation of God's Glory, that the
 " Covenant of Justice should pre-
 " cede that of Mercy. It is the
 " darkening the Plot that gives
 " Beauty to the Discovery; and the
 " deeper the Distress is laid, the
 " more

“ more conspicuous is the Deliver- SERM.
 “ ance*.” God, at the very Time I.
 that Man transgressed, was very
 ready, and very much inclined to
 forgive him ; but he would not do
 it till a proper Satisfaction was made
 to his Justice. When this was done,
 then, as his Justice was fully satis-
 fied in severely punishing the *Sin*,
 so was his Goodness as gloriously
 displayed in freely forgiving the *Sin-*
ner. By this means he reconciled
 Justice and Mercy ; made it appear
 that his Justice was not to be tram-
 pled upon ; to be trifled with ; and
 at the same time gave us a convinc-
 ing Instance, and an indisputable
 Proof, that *his Mercy was over all*
his Works. — It appears then, that
 in God’s suffering the first Covenant
 to be violated, He intended to glo-
 rify *Himself*, as well as to make ma-
 nifest his Good-will to *us*. Both
 which He has done most effectually.

C

For,

* *Stackhouse’s Body of Divinity, Page 532.*

SERM. For, there was no other way in

I.

which we could have had a more remarkable Instance of his Goodness; in short, there was no other way in which we could more effectually have experienced the very great Excellency and Perfection of all his other Attributes. --- What particular Honours might have been conferred upon *Adam*, provided he had never sinned at all; how long he might have continued in Paradise, and been allowed a full and uninterrupted Enjoyment of every thing he there met with; or whether “ he “ might not, at some Period of his “ earthly Life, have been translated “ to Heaven, and there united to “ God in his eternal Enjoyments, it “ were needless here to enquire. So “ very many are the Conjectures “ that are made in relation to this “ Point, that it would be almost “ endless even to mention them. If “ we keep within proper Bounds, “ and

“ and confine our Judgments (which SERM.
 “ we always *should* do) to what we I.
 “ read in Scripture, nothing appears
 “ *there*, but that the Promise of
 “ Heaven was made in *Christ alone*;
 “ and that as our Impunity is the
 “ Effect of *his* Satisfaction, our Title
 “ to Happiness is the Purchase of
 “ his Blood; which is therefore call-
 “ ed *the Blood of the New Testa-*
 “ *ment*, and the Fruit of his redun-
 “ dant Merit; with whose perfect
 “ Obedience God was so well pleas-
 “ ed, that he promised to confer on
 “ those that believed in Him, all
 “ the glorious Privileges of the Sons
 “ of God; to take them to himself
 “ in his eternal Kingdom, and in
 “ those celestial Mansions, whereof
 “ Paradise, with its highest Plea-
 “ sures, was but a faint Shadow,
 “ and a very imperfect Representa-
 “ tion*.----- Upon the whole we
 may observe, that though Sin very

C 2

much

* Stackhouse's Body of Divinity, Page 531.

SERM. much abounded in the Breach of the
 I. first Covenant, yet Grace was still
 much more abounding in the tender
 Offers of Mercy reached out to us in
 the second. *The first Man* indeed,
 1 Cor. xv. 47. *was of the Earth, earthy*, whereas
the second Man was the Lord from
Heaven. We may therefore draw
 this Inference in the Words of the
 Apostle, *Death reigned from Adam*
to Moses, even over them who had
not sinned after the Similitude of
 Rom. v. 14, 15, 21. *Adam's Transgression, who is the Fi-*
gure of him that was to come. But
not as the Offence, so also is the free
Gift; for if, through the Offence of
One, many be dead, much more the
Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace,
which is by one Man Jesus Christ,
has abounded unto many. Sin reign-
ed unto Death, that Grace might
reign through Righteousness unto eter-
nal Life. A Reflection of this kind
 occasioned that Exclamation of one
 the Antients, " O happy Fault, says
 " he,

“ he, (meaning that which *Adam* SERM. I.
 “ was guilty of) not in itself, but by
 “ the wise and merciful Counsel of
 “ God ; which was repaired in a
 “ way so advantageous, that the
 “ Salvation of the Earth is the Won-
 “ der of Heaven, and the Redemp-
 “ tion of Man the Joy of An-
 “ gels *.”

Without Controversy then, and 1 Tim. iii. 16.
 beyond all Conception, *great was*
this Mystery of Godliness, God ma-
nifest in the Flesh. May we be so
 far sensible of it, as to be unfeign-
 edly thankful for it. Let us serious-
 ly and frequently consider the many
 great and good Things which God
 has done for us ; and let us ever re-
 member, that it was *for us Men,*
and for our Salvation, that He came
down from Heaven. Let us alway Pf xxxiv.
give Thanks unto the Lord, and let
his Praise be ever in our Mouths.

It was He that *saved our Life from* Pfal. ciii.

SERM. *Destruction, and it is He that every*

I.

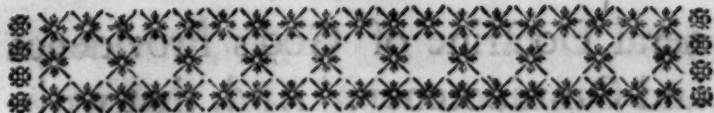
Day crowns us with fresh Instances of Mercy and Loving-kindness. Let it be further added, that it was not our Merit but his Mercy, not our Foresight but his Providence that delivered us; and therefore, not un-

Pfal. cxv. 1. to us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise, for thy loving Mercy, and for thy Truth's sake; for thy Mercy which was the Motive, and thy Truth's sake, which was the End, of thine inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one eternal God, be ascribed, as is most strictly due, all possible Glory, and Honour, and Praise, now and ever.

10 FE 60



SERMON



S E R M O N II.

The Goodness of God, in the
daily Preservation of Man.



J O B XII. 7, 8, 9, 10.

*Ask now the Beasts, and they shall
teach thee; and the Fowls of the
Air, and they shall tell thee: or
speak to the Earth, and it shall
teach thee; and the Fishes of the
Sea shall declare unto thee. Who
knoweth not in all these, that the
Hand of the Lord hath wrought
this? in whose Hand is the Soul
of every living thing, and the
Breath of all Mankind.*

THIS Chapter contains, and in SERM.
it Job acknowledges, the ge- II.
C 4 neral

SERM.

II.

neral Doctrine of God's Providence and Omnipotency. And, that without the divine Protection we must necessarily cease to be; that we must sink into our original nothing, and return to the Dust from whence we came, is surely a Subject very proper to be considered, though it can be by no means disputed. *In God we live, move, and have our Being*; every Danger we escape is entirely owing to his paternal Inspection, every Comfort we enjoy is immediately to be referred to *Him*, as the sole Author and Giver of it. This, I hope, and believe, we are all sensible of, and very ready to acknowledge. That our Practice for the future may correspond with this important Principle, I propose to treat of the Words just now delivered, in the following easy manner, *viz.*

Acts xvii.
28.

I. First,

I. First, Lay before you the absolute Necessity of a superintending, over-ruling Providence ; and then,

II. Secondly, Infer from hence, the very great *Reason* we have, as well as the indispensable *Obligation* we are under, to be unfeignedly thankful for this God's inestimable Love, in the *Preservation*, as well as in the *Creation* of us.

I. I am first to prove the absolute Necessity of a superintending, over-ruling Providence. ----- It must be confessed indeed, that admirably well formed, and very wisely contrived is the whole Frame and Structure of the human Body. There is such an exact Correspondence between all the constituent Parts of it, each so punctually performs its particular Office, so properly exerts its particular Faculties, that they all, as it were,
amica-

SERM.

II.

amicably conspire, and jointly contribute, to compleat the Order and perfect Beauty of each particular. And yet, notwithstanding this exact Harmony, this wonderful Order, so very nice and fine are many of the most principal Parts, that the smallest Accident may occasion the greatest Danger, and a Deficiency in one part entirely subvert the Existence of the whole. This has always been allowed, by those whose particular Study may be supposed to have made them particularly acquainted with it, and who therefore *may*, and certainly *ought* to be looked upon as the most proper Judges of it.

Job x. 11,
12.

Thou hast clothed me with Skin and Flesh (says holy Job) and hast fenced me with Bones and Sinews. Thou hast granted me Life and Favour; but it is thy Visitation (or as the Septuagint seem better to have rendered it, επισκοπή, Thy Inspection) that has preserved my Spirit. --- We are allowed,

lowed, and indeed *commanded*, for SERM.
II.
the Accomplishment of natural Ends to make use of natural Means; thus, for Instance, we ourselves may be serviceable to ourselves; that is, by proper Care and Caution we may be happily instrumental in the Enjoyment of a good State of Health, or any other Blessing whatever. But yet, this must be *originally* the Gift of God; no Good can be done, no happy Effect wrought, without the divine Concurrence; all our best concerted Schemes must fall infinitely short of the End proposed; *our* Wisdom (if we can properly be said to *have* any) without *His*, can be but Folly, and all our Learning, at the very best, but a reputable Vanity. Though we are the Work of God, and consequently were at first compleat and perfect, yet we are by no means so far compleat as to be Self-sufficient; not so far independent as to depend entirely upon *ourselves*.

SERM. *ourselves.* We are no more able
 II. to *preserve*, than we were at first
 to *create*, *Preservation* being no less
 than *Creation* the incommunicable
 Prerogative of God himself. It was
 very easy for the Almighty (as to
Him indeed what can be otherwise?)
 to *breathe* into Man *the Breath of*
Life; and it is *as* easy to take away
 our Breath, and then we die; ac-
 cording to that of the Psalmist, *When*
 Psal. civ. *thou hidest thy Face we are troubled,*
 29. *when thou takest away our Breath*
we die, and are turned again to our
Dust. Even in the very midst of
Life we are in Death, every Mo-
 ment subject to many and great Dan-
 gers. Some we might possibly pre-
 vent, could we but foresee; others
 there are, which, though we *could*
 foresee, we could by no means pre-
 vent; so that there seems to be a
 Variety, though not a very agree-
 ble one. Under these Circumstances,
 in a State so very indigent and depen-
 dent,

dent, *why is Earth and Ashes proud?* SERM.
What *one* thing is there, of our own, II.
that with any shew of Reason we Ecclus. x.
can pretend to value ourselves upon? 9.

What we chiefly know is, that we know nothing; and it is a very pretty Observation I have somewhere met with, that he is a *great* Man who knows how *little* he is; how insignificant *in* himself, how helpless *of* himself. *Lord, thou hast* Ps. xxxix.
made my Days as it were a Span 6.
long, and mine Age is even as nothing in respect of thee, and verily every Man living is altogether Vanity. Words strong and expressive! but strictly true in every particular. To imagine that we are able *of ourselves to help ourselves*, is trifling and ridiculous; none so vain as to believe it, none, I hope, so irrational as to suppose it. Professed Atheists alone deny a Providence, we are rather apt to *forget* than to question it; when in Danger we
are

SERM. are very ready to acknowledge his
 II. Sovereignty; then, like St *Peter*,
 Mat. xiv. when *the Wind was boisterous, and*
 30. *he began to sink, Lord, save me,*
 is in every Man's Mouth. We take
 it for granted then, that we *are*, and
must be, continually exposed to an
 infinite Variety of Dangers; to num-
 berless Casualties; and are fully
 convinced, that Accidents very often
 happen, even when they are least
 expected. All this is experimental-
 ly, and therefore undeniably true.
 These Reflections may at first sur-
 prize and shock, but they ought
 rather to administer great Comfort
 and Consolation. For, in a State
 of seeming Security, we are very
 apt to forget ourselves; bad are the
 Consequences that usually attend an
 uninterrupted Tranquillity; where-
 as, when we are apprehensive of
 Danger, it is but natural for us to
 be upon our Guard; to exert our-
 selves; to *shew ourselves Men*. When
 we

we consider these Things *abstract-* SERM.
edly, only just as they are in *them-* II.
selves, and as at *first View* only they
appear to us, in *this Case*, I must
confess, we have Reason to be un-
easy, and we must very improperly
be said to be *disquieted in vain*:
But when we at the same Time
consider, that we are under the
watchful Eye of an inspecting Pro-
vidence; that God Almighty is our
Support; that Omnipotence itself
interposes in our behalf; this must
very widely alter the Case; must
immediately dispel all gloomy Ap-
prehensions; must and *will* carry
us with Ease, and Safety, and Satis-
faction too, through *all the Changes*
and Chances of this mortal Life.--
The Invasions that are made both
from within, and likewise from
without, affect Soul and Body. ---
I beg leave to consider them dis-
tinctly.----- The Soul indeed, that
thinking Substance, that incorporeal
Inhabitant

SERM. Inhabitant within us, (as it is often
 II. termed) stands secured in her Exist-
 ence. There is, however, such a
 very close Intimacy between them,
 they combine and operate together,
 and so mutually partake of each
 other's Happiness or Woe, that the
 Soul, by sympathizing with the
 Body, may probably, for a Time,
 be weakened, may perhaps, in some
 measure, be impaired, but cannot,
 in the present State of Things, pos-
 sibly be destroyed. It was made
 for Eternity, and therefore Time
 can have no Effect upon it; in this
 respect, *one Day is as a thousand
 Years, and a thousand Years but as
 one Day.* So that we are to con-
 sider it as utterly incapable of receiv-
 ing any considerable Hurt *here*, and
 that its Happiness or Misery depends
 entirely upon Futurity; that is, in
 short, that it must either be com-
 pletely happy, or insupportably mi-
 serable, in a future State; and that,
 to

to all Eternity. Its Behaviour *here*, SERM.
II.
is to determine its Fate hereafter; to which let it be added, that it has here three very formidable Enemies to struggle with, *viz.* the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; each of which is resolutely bent upon its Ruin, indefatigably active to bring it about. That it is *of itself* utterly unable to bear up against so unequal a Conflict; that it must therefore unavoidably fall a Prey to such potent Adversaries, unless dependent upon a much greater Strength than its own, is too plain to need a Proof. But, that it *has* such a superior Power to trust to, that *must*, and *may* be safely depended upon; that will most certainly enable it to maintain its Ground, even against the strongest Opposition imaginable, is a Happiness too great not to be gratefully acknowledged; a Blessing, too valuable, not to be earnestly contended for. The most inveterate

D Efforts

SERM.

II.

Efforts that the united Force of Hell can make, are nothing, if the Almighty does but interpose; all their Schemes, how artfully soever formed, prove entirely unsuccessful; Peace, be still, and *the very Devils believe*

Jam. ii. 19. *and tremble; though they are mighty*

Pf. xciii. 5. *and rage horribly, yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier.* If God

be for us, who can be against us?

The Man, happy under an almighty Patronage, is every where secure.

Pf. lxxxix.

23.

The Enemy shall not be able to do him Violence, the Son of Wickedness shall not hurt him. To be continually perplexed with inextricable

Luke xi.

24.

Difficulties, seeking Rest, but finding none; to feel and lament Weaknesses, without a Remedy for them; to be conscious of Sins, and not to know where to apply for Pardon; to be without Assurance in our Hopes, and without Comfort in our Fears, is, and must most certainly be thought to be, a very deplorable Case. But,

to

to be assured that these Weaknesses SERM. II.
have a Remedy, that these Sins may,
and will most certainly be pardoned,
if truly repented of; to have the
firmest Assurance in our Hopes,
and the greatest Comfort in our
Fears, is so far from being a de-
plorable Case, that it is a Happiness
inexpressible; beyond what the
Heart of Man could possibly have
conceived. This seems to be exactly
the State of the Case, with respect
to the Soul. Allow a Providence,
and we are, or however, we *may* be,
if we will, as happy as we can desire
to be; only destroy the Notion of
one, and we are, and must always
unavoidably be, *of all Men most mi-* I Cor. xv.
serable. The one will speak Peace ^{19.}
to our Souls at the Hour of Death,
and in the Day of Judgment; the
other will keep us without Hope
here, and leave us in utter Despair
hereafter. After all, it must be
granted, that we cannot be miserable

SERM.
II.

but by Choice; let proper Care be taken, and the Soul stands sure and stedfast; no Force but its *own*, is, or can be, able to destroy it. Peace *within*, and all *without* is calm and serene. — The Body; the Dangers and Disorders to which *that* stands exposed, come next to be considered.

The Production of Mankind was so immediately the Work of God, that the Power of no subordinate Intelligence whatever, could possibly be capable of it. The Body was at first compleat and perfect, and could not *but* be so, because (as has been observed) it came immediately from God. That it is now, every Hour, nay, every Moment subject to great Dangers and Disorders of various Kinds, every one knows, every one is, and must be sensible of. ---- Two Reasons have been assigned, why God, in the Formation of Man, should make particular Choice of
the

the Dust of the Ground. The First SERM.

is, " that from the Incongruity of II.

" the Matter Men might judge of

" the Difficulty, and learn to attri-

" bute the Glory of the Performance

" to Him alone *." The other Reason

suggested, more particularly ap-

plicable to the present Purpose, is,

" that by making the Dust of the

" Ground the constituent Matter of

" Man's Body, He might hereby

" teach us Humility, as often as we

" look upon ourselves, and consider

" the Meanness of our Original."

We may every Day (in Job's Phrase)

say to Corruption, *Thou art my Fa-* Job xvi:

ther; and to the Worm, Thou art 14.

my Mother, and my Sister. " Our

" Make is of the common Clay,

" as putrid and contemptible as

" that of other Creatures. So that

" in our most successful Gale of

" Fortune; in our highest Elevation

" of Honour; amidst all the gaudy

D 3

" Scenes

SERM. "Scenes of Pleasure; in all the gay

II. "Ideas of Wit and Beauty," and
 "other Accomplishments, we should

"do well to attend to that serious
 "and solemn Whisper, *Dust thou*

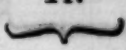
Gen. iii. "art, and unto *Dust thou shalt re-*
 19. "turn." We none of us know,

and humanly speaking, it is im-
 possible we ever *should* know,
 how soon we may be dismissed, or
 how long continued, in this our
 present State. *It is not for us to*

Acts i. 7. *know the Times and the Seasons,*
which the Father has put in his own

Power; whether we are to depart,
or to abide in the Flesh, He, and
He only knows. ---- We frequently

meet with melancholy Instances of
 sudden Death, in some perhaps,
 who have not lived out half their
 Days. One Day they droop, the
 next they die; so imperceptible,
 as it were, is the Distance between
 this World, and the next. When
 these Things happen, they make an
 Impression,

Impression, it is true, but not a SERM.
lasting one; we soon forget them II.
as though they had never been. 
Whereas, upon a cool Reflection,
we must be very agreeably surpris'd
that they do not happen much
oftener; was there not a Power
above us, we might reasonably ex-
pect them every Hour. So that the
Schoolmen have very properly termed
the *Preservation of the World a con-*
tinued Creation. It is to that al-
mighty Being who first made, and
still preserves us, that we stand in-
debted for all we have, or hope to
enjoy; to *Him who holdeth up our* Pf. lxvi. 8.
Soul in Life, and suffereth not our
Feet to slip. If we escape any Sin, it
is the Effect of His restraining Grace;
if we have avoided any Danger, it
was *His* Hand directed us, and to
Him be ascribed all the Praise and
Glory of it. May the Sense of these
His Blessings have this Effect upon
us, to make us better, and to lead

SERM. us to Repentance. --- Of all the Di-
 II. vine Perfections, that which repre-
 sents God under the Notion of an
amiable as well as a *glorious* Being;
 the *Father*, as well as the *Governor*
 of the Universe, is the Attribute of
 his Goodness. This finishes and
 compleats the Idea of God; repre-
 sents Him under the engaging and
 delightful Character of the *best*, as
 well as the *greatest* and most power-
 ful Being. *O praise the Lord, for*

Ps. CXXXV.

3.

the Lord is good; O sing Praises unto
his Name, for it is lovely. --- Proceed
 we now, as was proposed, to an In-
 ference or two deducible from the
 foregoing Reflections. --- And the
 First, and most natural one is this;
 from hence we should learn the
 very great *Reason* we have, as well
 as the indispensable *Obligation* we
 are under, to be unfeignedly thank-
 ful for this God's inestimable Love
 in the *Preservation*, as well as in the
Creation of us. All that we of our-
 selves

in the daily Preservation of Man. 41

selves could have done, could have SERM.
 signified nothing; it cost more to II.
 redeem our Souls, and Bodies too, Ps. xlix. 8.

*than is, or was, or ever could have
 been, in our Power to have paid.*

*So that the Acknowledgment can
 never be equal to the Obligation;
 we can never pay to the Full; the
 greatest Return we can possibly
 make, must, strictly speaking, fall
 infinitely short of the Good re-
 ceived.*

*But though we cannot
 make an adequate, we have all the
 Reason in the World to think, we
 may make an acceptable Return.*

*Let us then shew forth his Praise,
 not only with our Lips, but in our
 Lives, by giving up ourselves en-
 tirely to his Service, and by study-
 ing to serve Him in true Holiness
 and Righteousness all our Days.---*

*— Secondly, Let no Danger, the
 greatest that can threaten, inter-
 rupt us in our Duty. We must
 cheerfully,*

SERM. chearfully, constantly, and courageously adhere to the Cause we have hitherto maintained. Let us be stedfast, immoveable, for nothing can hurt us; *our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and He will deliver us.* He may, possibly, for the Trial of our Faith, permit various Attacks to be made upon us, but, by a proper Behaviour under them, in all these Things *we shall be more than Conquerors.* This is only designed to give an additional Lustre to our Virtue, thereby to entitle us to a more distinguished Station in the *many Mansions of Heaven.*

John xiv.
2.

In a word, and to conclude; Let us but *be faithful unto Death, and he will most assuredly give us a Crown of Life.* Which God Almighty of his infinite Mercy grant us all, through the Merits, and for the sake, of his dear and ever-blessed

Rev. ii. 10.

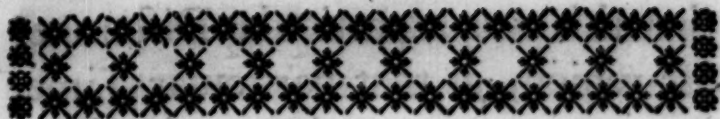
blest Son; to whom, with the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one eternal God, be ascribed, as is most strictly due, all possible Glory, and Honour, and Praise, now and for ever. *Amen.*

SERM.
II.



SERMON

10 FEB 60



S E R M O N I I I .

The Question put to *Naaman*
by his Servants, applied to
the Case of Religion.



2 KINGS V. 13.

----- *My Father, if the Prophet had
bid thee do some great Thing,
wouldst thou not have done it?
How much rather then, when
he saith unto thee, wash and be
clean ?*

IN this Chapter, *Naaman* (a very SERM.
considerable Person with *Ben-* I I I .
hadad King of *Syria*) applies to
Elisha for the Recovery of a Leprosy,
under which he had for some time
laboured. Here it is to be observed,
that

SERM.

III.

that this was a particular Distemper for which, at that particular Time, there was no *natural* Remedy. The Prophet, according to his known good Nature and Humanity, prescribes a very easy, and a very speedy Cure: Go, says he, *wash in Jordan seven times, and thy Flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean.* Naaman imagined he had made a Jest of him. What, says he, *are not Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damascus, better than all the Waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? And he went away in a Rage.* For which the Servants very smartly, but at the same time very modestly, reprimand him in the Words of the Text, *My Father,* (this was a Term of the greatest Love and Respect, and usually given to the greatest Princes in those Countries) *My Father,* say they, *if the Prophet had bid thee do some great Thing, wouldst thou not have*

have done it? How much rather SERM.
III.
then, when he saith unto thee, wash
and be clean?

I shall not confine myself to the very Letter of the Text, or indeed, take any further Notice of the Occasion of it, but shall consider the Words, as being, what they really are, very applicable to Religion; and shall shew,

I. First, That were its Precepts really hard and difficult, were they what the Text calls, *a great Thing*, yet even then, even upon this Supposition, we should be under an indispensable Obligation, strictly to observe, and punctually to perform them. I shall,

II. Shew, That they are by no Means hard or difficult; from whence will necessarily appear, *a fortiori*, the still greater Obligation we must upon this Account be under

SERM. der to a full and faithful Discharge
 III. of them.

First then; Were the Precepts of Religion really hard and difficult, were they what the Text calls, *a great Thing*, yet even then, even upon this Supposition, we should be under an indispensible Obligation, strictly to observe, and punctually to perform them.

If it be granted, (and I am sure it ought by no Means to be denied), that Rewards are a necessary Motive to Obedience; it will then follow, that in Proportion as the *Reward* is great, so ought also the *Performance* to be, in order to entitle us to the Reward. Thus far we may safely argue. Some indeed have carried this Point much further, and, I must own, *I think a great deal too far*. *They* maintain, that to serve God upon the Views of Heaven or Hell, upon the Principles of Hope, or Fear,

Fear, argues an unregenerate, servile, and mercenary Spirit; *they* teach us that we ought to serve Him without the Prospect of any Reward at all; merely upon the Account of the Excellencies of the Divine Nature, without so much as a Thought of reaping any Profit or Advantage from it. But this is a wild, romantic Notion; no such abstracted metaphysical Love is to be met with in Scripture. Our blessed Saviour himself *endured the Cross, despising the Shame*; and all this, *for the Joy* Heb. xii. 2. *that was set before Him.*—As God Almighty at first made us out of nothing, He had for this Reason an absolute Right and Dominion over us; for *He spake, and we were* Pf. cxlviii. *made; He commanded, and we were* 5. *created.* Though we ought, with the greatest Gratitude, to acknowledge that He is not, yet He *might* have been, an *arbitrary* Being; He might, with the strictest Justice have

E imposed

SERM.

III.

imposed the severest Laws, and upon the severest Penalties might have enjoined our strictest Observance of them. That He has not thus dealt with us, can be owing to nothing but His infinite Goodness and Mercy. As the Almighty at first endued Man with Reason, so has He been pleased all along to deal with him as a rational Being. He not only made him, but He likewise made him in order to be happy ; made him capable of Deliberation and Thought ; every way qualified to *refuse the Evil, and to choose the Good*. He proceeded with him in an ordinary and easy Method ; set before him Life and Death ; proposed to him Threats and Promises ; on the one hand, *Do this and thou shalt live ;* And, *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself ;* on the other, *In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Here, it must be acknowledged, Man had a very easy

Part

Isa. vii. 15.

Prov. ix.
12.

Gen. ii. 17.

Part to act; the Way in the which SERM. III.
 he should go, was plainly pointed
 out to him. That he unhappily
 deviated from it, inconsiderately
 listened to the bewitching Whispers
 of a deluding Charmer, was en-
 tirely his Fault. A Fault! exclu-
 sive of the unbounded Mercies of
 God, by no Means to be pardoned.
 Thus from a near View of the un-
 speakable Joys of Heaven, he made
 himself liable to the extream Tor-
 ments of Hell, and became a most
 melancholy Object of God's heavy
 Wrath and Displeasure. What then
 is now to be done? What Possibility
 was there now left of recovering the
 Divine Favour; forfeited by Sin,
 utterly lost by the most stupid In-
 sensibility, the most notorious Inso-
 lence? With what Face can he now
 dare to approach offended Majesty?
 or who shall intercede for him?
Wherewith shall he come before the Micah vi.
Lord, and bow himself before the ^{6.}

SERM. *high God? He cannot go up to*
 III. *Heaven, for God is there; if he*
 Pf cxxxix. *goes down to Hell, God is there also,*
 7. *and may visit him with the severest*
Inflictions of Wrath. Well there-
 Gen iii. *fore might he thus expostulate, I*
 10. *heard thy Voice in the Garden, and*
I was afraid; afraid indeed! in this
disconsolate Condition, this forlorn
Situation. So that we are now to
consider Man, not only as a Crea-
ture, but, with the additional Cha-
acter of a sinful Creature; and if,
(as has been observed,) even at the
very first, before Man had actually
finned, God, as his Creator, had
an absolute Right and Dominion
over him; if, even in a State of In-
nocence, God might most justly
have proposed his own Terms, here
the Argument must necessarily hold
much stronger. Man had entirely
forfeited his Right to Happiness;
all that he could now expect was
eternal Misery, (neither more nor
less,)

less,) for according to the express SERM. III.
 Articles of the first Covenant, to the strictest Terms of which he had voluntarily agreed, *the Wages of Sin was to be Death*. If then, after all this, God should think fit, (as He has been most graciously pleased to think fit,) still to give us an Opportunity of being happy, *what Reward shall be given or done unto the Lord* for this so signal a Deliverance? Here is an eminent Instance of the Truth of that Assertion, *As his Majesty is,* Ecc'us. ii. 18.
so is his Mercy. In these Circumstances, the Case could not admit of Rigour; whatever God had done, whatever his Determination had been, it must have been, according to the strictest Rules of Justice, right and equitable. His Inflictions could not have been severe, his Judgment must have been just. It is true indeed, He would not, I should rather say, (such is his Goodness,) that He *could* not have commanded what He

SERM. had not enabled us to perform ;
 III. therefore what he *has* commanded,
 we ought most chearfully to perform. For, it is impossible to conceive a Creator voluntarily giving Life, and all the Comforts of it to a Creature, and that that Creature should not be obliged to be thankful to Him, and to serve Him ; and if it be absurd *not* to serve God, it will necessarily follow, that it must not only be proper, but our meet, right, and bounden Duty to serve Him.

Matt. xix.
 17.

If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments, was our Saviour's immediate Answer to the young Man in the Gospel. A strict impartial Obedience was to be the only sure Condition of Happiness. It is observable, that this young Man had punctually observed, and long continued in, many excellent Duties ; and yet, upon the Refusal of *one* proposed to him afresh, he was immediately rejected, as utterly unqualified

qualified to be a Disciple of Christ. SERM. III.

The good Actions of his Life past were by no Means disregarded, or lost upon our blessed Saviour, for it is particularly recorded, that *Jesus beholding Him, loved Him.* But Mark x. 21.

still there was something wanting; one favourite, foolish Passion he could not but indulge himself in; this he was determined, at all Events, to hold fast, and not to let it go; which made him a very eminent, but at the same time, a very unhappy Instance, of what our Saviour had so often, and so emphatically declared to his Followers, *Whosoever he be of you, who, at proper Times, and upon proper Occasions, forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my* Luke xiv. 33.

Disciple. In the Jewish Oeconomy, under the Mosaic Dispensation, there not only *might* be, but there really *was* a good deal of Rigour; and yet we are to observe, that the Law was

SERM.

III.

Gal. iii. 10.

Deuter.

xxvii. 26.

established with a *Curse upon every one who continued not in all Things that were written therein to do them.* Which Reflection cuts off all Hopes of Heaven, when grounded upon such an Obedience, as shall presume to dispense with any particular Precept contained in it. But, say some, the Gospel is a *more sure Word of Prophecy*, particularly designed to abate and soften the Rigour of the Law, and to propose Salvation upon much easier Terms. All this is undoubtedly, and therefore undeniably, true; the Gospel *does* offer Salvation upon much easier Terms than the Law did, and all the Precepts of it are, (as shall be presently shewn,) plain and easy. But what does this prove? What does all this amount to? It will by no Means follow, because God has required *little*, that therefore He could not have required *more*. No
Man's

2 Pet. i.
19.

Man's Reason, I presume, will suffer SERM.
him to argue thus. In case of any III.
notorious Crime committed, a Party
offended, may, perhaps, out of
Good-nature and Compassion, so
far forgive the Party offending, as
not to insist upon the strictest Terms
of an *adequate* Satisfaction. But this,
I apprehend, proves nothing more
than Tenderneſs and Good-nature in
the one, and the greatest Returns of
Gratitude due from the other. Thus
in the Case before us.

But further; Duly consider the
vast and infinite Distance between
God and us; consider likewise the
exceeding abundant Love of God,
manifested in the Works of Creation
and Redemption; look up to *the*
Heaven for Height; reflect upon Prov. xxv.
the Joys that are there annexed to ^{3.}
the Obedience of the Gospel; and
then, this Expostulation will natu-
rally and necessarily introduce itself;
What have we ever done, or what
can

SERM.
III.

can we ever do, to deserve all this? No indeed, we can never *deserve* it, though at the same Time we have all the Reason in the World to think, unless we are wretchedly wanting to ourselves, that we not only *may* be, but that we really *shall* be, fully and compleatly possesst of it. If therefore we seriously reflect, we cannot but acknowledge, that all that *can* be done, *ought* to be done. Therefore, though the Precepts of Religion were really and undeniably hard and difficult, yet, as they are the Commands of God, and as God has a Right to command what He pleases, and to be obeyed in what He *does* command, it will necessarily follow, that for this Reason they ought strictly to be observed, and punctually performed. But this is not the Case ; I proceed,

II. To shew, that they are by no Means hard or difficult. So far from

from it, they exactly suit, and agree with the Rational, or the human Nature; with that fundamental Principle, or Character, which constitutes and makes us Men. SERM.
III.

St Paul expressly asserts them to be *our reasonable Service*. And Rom. xii. *Grotius* says, that the Nature of God requires a Worship, which does not consist in outward, carnal Rites and Ceremonies, but in Spirit and Integrity of Life; in Faith, Hope and Charity. He therefore offers the most reasonable, as well as the most acceptable Service, who lives regularly and piously, and walks according to the Dictates of the best Reason; who is religious and just; temperate and humble; compassionate and charitable; for these Things are in themselves the most rational, and we have the greatest Reason, as well as the highest Obligations, to perform them. Well did our blessed Saviour know the many and great Frailties

SERM.

III.

Frailties of human Nature, and its unhappy Tendency towards Evil; and therefore, appearing with all the Tenderness and Clemency which became the Saviour, the Redeemer, and Mediator of Mankind; He did not barely promulgate and deliver his Precepts to them, and then abandon them to the sole Conduct of their own Reason, and Free-will; but He also directed, and does still direct, their Judgment and Choice; assisted, and does still assist their good Endeavours with the Motions of his Holy Spirit, with Gifts and Graces from above. The Christian Religion, as has been already observed, is exactly suited to the Nature of Man. It was particularly designed to make him *good*, in order to make him *happy*; *all its Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, its Paths are Paths of Peace*. It bids us do nothing, but what it at the same Time enables us to perform; it prohibits

Prov. iii.
17.

Naaman by his Servants, applied. 61

prohibits nothing, but what it is, SERM. III.
in all Respects, and upon all Ac-
counts, our greatest and truest In-
terest to decline and avoid. *Without*
God we can do nothing, but *with*
God all Things are possible, *all*
Things are not only possible, but easily Mark ix. 23.
practicable, as our blessed Saviour
himself assures us, to him that be-
lieveth. St John says, the *Command-*
ments of God are not grievous. This 1 John v. 3.
Negation rather denotes a strong
Affirmation, that they are the *very*
reverse of being grievous. It is true
indeed, our blessed Saviour compares
Christianity to a Yoke and a Burden,
but let it ever be observed, that that
very Yoke is easy, and that *Burden* Matt. xi. 30.
light. *His Service*, so far from be-
ing a Slavery, is the most *perfect*
Freedom; those therefore *whom the*
Son has made free, are free indeed. John viii. 36.
A very * good Writer has made the
following Remark, that Jesus's Mi-
racles

* Bishop Kidder.

SERM.

III.

racles were Mercies, those of Moses
so many Plagues only. Upon which
Observation, this Inference at least
may be well-grounded, that the
Gospel Dispensation is the only true
and perfect Law of Liberty, as St
James terms it; whereas, the Mo-
saic was an Institution, so harsh and
rigid, that neither we are, nor our
Fathers were, able to bear. The
Christian Religion has perfected the
Law of Moses, discovered the true
Spirit of it; unravelled all its secret
Meanings, and accomplished all the
Figures in it; and if it has abrogated
some of its ceremonial Institutions,
it was only with a Design of making
the essential Points of it observed the
better.----The Ends of our Saviour's
Coming, the Scriptures expressly
declare to be, the taking away Ini-
quity; the bringing in everlasting
Righteousness; and by both these
Effects, becoming an universal Bless-
ing to Mankind. But Iniquity can-
not

not be taken away, except the Guilt, SERM.
the Punishment, and Power of Sin III.
be removed; everlasting Righteousness cannot be brought in, but by the last and best Scheme of Religion; nor can these Blessings be universal, unless the whole World share in, and be the better for them. These are the natural Consequences of what our most blessed Lord and Master did and suffered for us; for this did He hunger and thirst; for this did He bleed and die. All He did and suffered, was with no other View, for no other Reason, and upon no other Account, but to make Mankind happy; what He has enjoined and commanded, are the Means now to be made use of, on *our* Part, to bring about, and to compleat this universal Happiness. So that Religion, in the very Nature of it, directly tends to make us happy; and if Happiness be the
End,

SERM.

III.

End, and the *only* End which it promotes and pursues, the Means, by which we may arrive at this End, must necessarily be easy in themselves, happy in their Consequences; they must *necessarily* be so, for this obvious Reason, because the Means can never be difficult, where the End is every Way, and in every Respect, worthy of them.

Ecclef. xii.
13.

Hear then the Conclusion of the whole Matter; Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole Duty of Man; the whole of his Duty, and consequently, the whole of his Happiness. This is the Way, and the only Way, to live easy and comfortably here, as well as to be for ever happy hereafter. This only can furnish us with that threefold impenetrable Defence, that invincible Helmet of Salvation, of which, no Terrors can disarm us, no Force deprive us; a good Cause; a good

Naaman *by his Servants, applied.* 65

a good Conscience; and a good
GOD. SERM.
III.

Now to the great God of Heaven and Earth, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one eternal God, be ascribed, as is most strictly due, all possible Glory, and Honour, and Praise, now and for ever. *Amen.*



F

SERMON

Isaiah 40:3-5

a good Conscience; and a good
God, and righteous and merciful

Now to the great God of Hea-

ven and Earth, Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost, Amen and one

06 21 01

eternal God, be ascribed, as is meet

truly due, all possible glory, and

Honor, and Praise, now and for

ever. Amen.



SERMON
F



S E R M O N I V .

Not to sit silent, but to defend Religion,
when rudely and insolently attacked,
the indispensable Duty of every Christian.

When Truth or Virtue an Affront endures,
Th' Affront is mine, my Friend, and shou'd be yours.
Mine as a Foe profess'd to false Pretence,
Who think a Coxcomb's Honour, like his Sense;
Mine as a Friend to every worthy Mind,
And mine as Man who feel for all Mankind.

POPE, Vol IV. 12mo, P. 243.



SERMON IV.

Not to sit silent, but to declare Religion,
when truly and intemperately attacked,
the indispensable Duty of every Christian.

1787.

When Truth or Virtue are At home, and
the At home is mine, my friend, and I am not
mine as a Fox preaches to the Foxes.

10 EE 60

Who think a Fox preaches to the Foxes,
mine as a friend to every man's friend,
And mine as I am with you, for all mankind.

Poe, Vol IV, 1787, P. 173.



P S A L. CXXXIX. 21, 22.

*Do not I hate them, O Lord, that
hate Thee? and am not I grieved
with those that rise up against
Thee? Yea, I hate them right
sore, [or as it is rendred in the
other Translation,] I hate them
with perfect Hatred.*

THE great Decay of Religion, SERM. IV.
and the insolent Overbear-
ing of Impiety, *has* always been,
and *must* always be, a Matter of
great Concern to the serious and
thinking Part of Mankind; and we
may be assured, that every Man
who has the Honour of God, and
the Interests of Religion at Heart,
will use his best Endeavours to check
the Insolence of Vice, and to the

SERM. utmost of his Power oppose the
 IV. } Overflowings of Ungodliness.

'Tis a melancholy Reflection, but certainly matter of Fact, that he who engages in this will meet with a great many Difficulties, and expose himself to the Contempt of some, and the Insults of others. The gay Part of the World are too knowing to be taught, and too great to be reprov'd. They will not suffer any Reflections upon their Conduct, or admit of the least Restraining. To please their *Persons*, you must not be displeased with their *Principles*; and if they *must* hear you, it shall be upon their own Terms, or not at all. But we are to know that such a slavish Complaisance is inconsistent with Duty. In the Levitical Law the Command is express; *Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him*: And under the Gospel Dispensation we have

have it in still stronger Terms. *If* ^{SERM.}
thy Brother shall trespass against ^{IV.}
thee, (by which is originally meant,
you in particular, but it will like-
 wise admit of another Sense, *shall*
be guilty of any Offence of any kind)
go and tell him his Fault between
thee and him alone; if he shall
hear thee, thou hast gained thy
Brother. But if he will not hear
thee, (if he will have none of thy
Counsel, but despises all thy Reproof,) ^{Prov. i. 30.}
then take with thee one or two more,
that in the Mouth of two or three
Witnesses every Word may be esta-
blished; and if he shall neglect to
hear them, tell it to the Church:
But if he neglect to hear the
Church, let him be unto thee as an ^{Mat. xviii.}
Heathen Man, and a Publican; as ^{15, 16, 17.}
 one unfit for Society, and upon all
 Occasions to be avoided. — Give
 me Leave to make one Remark,
 and then I'll proceed. The Text
 is very full and expressive; and the

SERM. Word *Hate* or *Hatred*, is used no

IV. less than four times in two short
 Verses. What can be the Meaning
 of this? Will a *good* Man, so good
 a Man as *David*, bear such *Malice*,
such Hatred in his Heart? Yes
 surely, against the declared Ene-
 mies to God and Goodness it is his
 Duty to do so. Their *Persons* in-
 deed he may and ought to wish
 well to; but their Company, as
 dangerous, is always to be avoided;
 and their Vices, as scandalous, can-
 not be too publicly exposed. And
 this, I apprehend, may be the full
 Meaning and Import of these strong
 Expressions made use of in the
 Text. And now, if you'll favour
 me with your Attention, I'll im-
 mediately enter upon the two fol-
 lowing Enquiries:

First, How far we may, consist-
 ently with a Sense of Duty and
 De-

Decency, converse with Men of known bad Character; and, SERM.
IV.

Secondly, When we *do* converse with them, in what manner we should behave towards them.

Our *first* Enquiry is, How far we may, consistently with a Sense of Duty and Decency, converse with Men of loose Principles and vicious Practice.

St *Paul*, in the fifth Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, expresses himself thus; *I have written unto you, says he, not to keep Company; if any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous, or an Idolator, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat.* This Expression, *no not to eat*, has generally been allowed to have respect only to excommunicated Persons, to such as have been judicially separated from the Communion of the Church; and with regard to
These

SERM.

IV.

These to be taken in the very strictest Sense. But as to others he explains his Meaning; *yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World, or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World:* that is, If ye are determin'd only to be acquainted with those who behave themselves as they should do, and in all respects live agreeably to the Rules of that Religion which they profess; in this case I fear you will have few Opportunities of *conversing at all*. My Design then in what I write to you, is this; Avoid as much as you can all *Familiarity*; do not be engaged in an *Intimacy*; but only keep up such an Acquaintance with them, as perhaps may be absolutely necessary for common Life, and civil Intercourse. Hitherto you may go, but no further.—Business in Life must be carried on; and in this,

as

as in all other Cases, the Means must be used for the Attainment of the End. It may be very true, that a Person, without any Sense of Religion, or indeed, the least Appearance of it, may yet be a very *safe*, or to use the common Term, a very *good* Man to deal with; and as such, in the Eye of the far greater Part of the World, unexceptionable. But still, certainly I should give the Preference to another Man, in other respects equal, but in point of Religion superior to him. I should do it, because I should imagine a greater *Confidence* might be reposed in such a one, and consequently, should think myself in better Hands. In short, as to any of the common Concerns in Life, it is rather a Matter of Prudence than Duty to enquire into the Characters of those we deal with. And as we are to be particularly careful to be true and just in all our Dealings with regard

SERM.

IV.

SERM.

IV.

regard to others, so may we use all proper means to engage *them* in the same Method in relation to ourselves. But, what I chiefly insist upon, is this, that we must not be *Great* (as we call it) with Men of bad Character: We must not contract a *Friendship* with them; because, if we do, probably we may partake of their Sins; but if not, we shall certainly have the Credit of them. For, it has always been almost a standing Rule to judge of Men by the Company they keep; and indeed, it is a Reflection long since passed into a Proverb. And to be sure with a great deal of Reason. For it is absurd to suppose that any Man would choose Company disagreeable to him. And Mankind have ever acted with Conviction enough of this Truth in worldly Matters, in secular Views, though not so much as might be wished in religious ones. Hear what
St

St Paul says in this Case, and take SERM. IV.
 his Advice. Be ye not unequally
 yoked together with Unbelievers: 2 Cor. vi. 14.

μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγούμενοι ἀπίστοις,
Ne fiat altero iugo copulati infidelibus: “ Do not become such as
 “ in the same Yoke draw another
 “ Way.” This is a Metaphor taken
 from Horses or Oxen, which, being
 in the same Yoke, should draw to-
 gether, neither standing still, nor
 yet holding back. “ It is a ge-
 “ neral Precept, prohibitive of all
 “ unnecessary Communion and in-
 “ timate Fellowship with such as
 “ either in Matters of Faith or
 “ Worship, or in their Lives and
 “ Conversations declare themselves
 “ to be Unbelievers.” For, as he
 very justly argues, *What Fellow-
 ship has Righteousness with Un-
 righteousness? and what Commu-
 nion has Light with Darknes? What Concord has Christ with Be-
 lial? or what Part has he that Be-
 lieveth*

SERM. *lieveth with an Infidel?* What

IV. *Part or Portion, that is, what So-*
cietly or Communion has he that
believeth with him that believeth
*not *?* What have such Opposites
 to do together? Christ has no
 Fellowship with the Devil, there-
 fore we, who are Christians, ought
 to have no unnecessary Commu-
 nion with such who manifest them-
 selves to be of their Father the De-
 vil, by doing his Works.

The Behaviour of the Royal *Da-*
vid, the King of *Israel*, in the Case
 now before us, and the wise Reso-
 lution *He* made, well deserves our
 most serious Attention. *I will take*
no wicked Thing in hand; I hate
the Work of them that turn aside;
it shall not cleave to me. A fro-
ward Heart shall depart from me,
I will not know a wicked Person.
 A Man of a corrupt Mind and a
 wicked Life, of an infamous aban-
 doned

Pfal. ci.
3, 4.

* *Peel's Annotations, 2 Cor. vi.*

done Principle, such as are but SERM.
IV.
 too commonly the most likely to
 be preferred, “such a one shall
 “be banished *my Court*, lest he
 “should tempt *me*, or infect the
 “rest of my Family; or however,
 “which is sufficient, be injurious
 “or scandalous to my People *.”
 I will be so far from encourag-
 ing such a Person, or from screen-
 ing him, that I will not *own* him.
 A noble Resolution indeed! and
 well worthy the Man who made
 it!

I'll now proceed to my *second*
 Enquiry, that if at any time we
 should be unavoidably engaged in
bad Company, then, in what man-
 ner we should behave towards them.

Resolutely to defend, and in
 proportion to our Circumstances and
 Abilities, zealously to maintain the
 Cause of Religion, is a Duty strictly
 incum-

* *Pool's* Annotat. on the 101st Psalm.

SERM. incumbent on every one; and he
 IV. who looks upon himself as a Christian, and would so be looked upon by others, and has solemnly engaged *manfully to fight under Christ's Banner*, is guilty of the basest Treachery, and a most scandalous Desertion, whenever he drops that Cause he has undertaken to support. If we consider how much our Great Lord and Master did and suffered; how bitter *that Cup* which He even begged *might pass from him*; how strong that Agony when *his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto*
 Luke xxii. *Death; and his Sweat as it were*
 44. *great Drops of Blood falling down to the Ground*: If at the same time we remember, that all He did and suffered was entirely for our sakes, surely we can't forget this dying Master, *this* suffering, persecuted Saviour. Can we coolly give up his Interest? No Ingratitude like that. Are we afraid to own him? No Cowar-

Cowardice equal to it. But give me Leave; as shocking as *this* is, I fear 'tis a common Case; and I wish there are not *many* who are even ashamed to thank him for the very Meat they eat. Grace, both before and after Meat, is in many Families, and indeed in Company in general, very much out of Fashion; and especially among the *Great* Ones of the World. But, let them be as Great as they will, I am obliged to say, I should never forgive myself if I did'nt, that where this is the Case, every Morfel they eat, is one more than they deserve. Thus, *their Table is made a Snare to take themselves withal, and those very Things, which should have been for their Wealth,* prove to them the direct and immediate *Occasion of falling.* But it may happen, that some who have the greatest Abhorrence of such Things *themselves*, may yet be *Wit-*

G

nesses

SERM.
IV.

Psal. lxxix.
23.

SERM.

IV.

1 Tim.

v. 22.

nesses of them. Are they then to be Partakers of other Mens Sins? or are they to reprove them? Certainly to reprove them; and by no means, by a base Connivance, to partake of their Guilt. But, some Man will say, the Offender may be too Great to be reprov'd. That can't be: Remember the honest Nathan; *Thou art the Man*, says he, to no less a Person than the King upon the Throne. But the Word of the Lord was precious in those Days, and he who had once put his Hand to the Plough, thought himself obliged not to look back. But besides; Nathan the Prophet was sent from God; and so is every Minister of God's Word. And it is his particular Province, should there be Occasion, to reprove even Kings for His sake; to wrestle against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against spiritual

1 Sam.

iii. 1.

Luke

ix. 62.

Psal. cv.

14

tual Wickedness even in High Places. But here indeed he's to proceed with the greatest Caution; the nicest Prudence, and the strictest Decency, are absolutely necessary; but if this won't do, then rougher Methods are to take place; and tho' the Great Man may be *offended* forsooth, instead of being *reformed*, (which is probable enough) let his Resentment run ever so high, still let the Minister of God keep his Ground, and like his great Predecessor, let him *reason of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come*, tho' it should put Felix into a Fit of Trembling.

SERM.
IV.

Ephes.
vi. 12.

Acts
xxiii. 25.

But to proceed; and that from a higher to a lower Degree. — Should you then meet with your *Equals*, with those whom you might be *free* with, should *they* behave in an indecent, irregular manner, what Method would you observe towards 'em? I shall be a little

SERM.
IV.

Prov.
xiv. 9.

Prov.
xxvi. 18,
19.

longer upon this, because I take this to be a Point in which most in middle Life are chiefly concerned. — *Fools may make a Mock at Sin*, but they must be Fools *indeed* that *do*. In Solomon's Language a Man may *play with Firebrands, Arrows and Death*, and say, *Am I not in Sport?* but all the World will take him to be mad. And so is every Man who scoffs at Religion, or looks upon Things serious and sacred, as a proper Subject for Ridicule and Drollery. If there be a Heaven and a Hell, and I believe there are very few that will dare to *say*, or indeed can they possibly *think*, there is *not*? Why then should they make a Jest of *that*, which possibly may be their own, or another's Damnation? But these Gentlemen seem, as it were, to make a Party against Religion, and, like the Devil himself, whose Interest they so industriously espouse, *walk about*

about seeking whom they may de- SERM: IV.
 vour. They are not contented to i Pet. v. 8.
 be wicked themselves; unless they
 can make others so too, and by this
 means are answerable, not only for
 their own Commissions, but for the
 many they have encouraged in the
 same impious Presumptions. They
 must have the Credit of making a
Profelyte to Vice; and when he is
 made, they make him (if possible)
twofold more the Child of Hell Matt. xxiii. 15.
than themselves. Then they glory
 in their Shame, proclaim their Con-
 quest, triumph in their Debauche-
 ries; and, lest their Zeal in the Cause
 should be suspected, I believe o'my
 Conscience, sometimes boast even
 of Sins they never committed. Thus
 they fall from one Wickedness to
 another, till at last they work all Un- Psal. lxix. 28.
 cleanness with Greediness, as the Apo-
 stle expresses it, (*Ephes. iv. 19.*) God
 gives 'em over to a reprobate Mind, Rom. i. 28.
 to an impenitent Heart; the Con-

SERM.
IV.

Gen.
xlix. 6.

sequence of which is, they are so far from being *afraid* of Him, that they then laugh at Hell; and by their Behaviour at least, even *dare* the Almighty to damn 'em. O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret; unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united. But let it be observed, that before they come to this Pass, before they run so great a Length as this, they are not only old Offenders, but have likewise met with a good deal of Encouragement. For Vice is naturally very timorous. The Libertine finds himself unsupported from within, and is therefore solicitous to confirm his Diffidence, and remove his Shame, by the Countenance and Esteem of Men. Here then it is *our* Business to interpose; and just as far as *his* Wickedness may be the Result of *our* Silence, (which is generally understood to give *Consent*,) so far Sin lies at *our* Door.

Door. Would to God *we* were SERM. IV.
as hearty in the Cause of Virtue,
as Men of this Character and Com-
plexion, in *that* of Vice. The
Effect of it would soon appear:
They must then herd together; or,
like the first Transgressors in the
Garden, *hide themselves*. They'd Gen. iii. 8.
then be ashamed to make their
public Appearance, and instead of
the Applause they may *now* meet
with, would only be pitied and
despised. And 'tis very probable,
that this might put 'em into an-
other way of Life, and make 'em
act like other Men. For, 'twas
observed, even in the Infancy of
Christianity, that nothing was of
greater Service to it, than the In-
nocency of the Lives, and the Con-
stancy of the Faith, of those who
profess it. — And so it is now. —
In short, *they* must either submit
to *us*, or *we* to *them*. If the for-
mer, we gain our Point; if the
latter,

SERM.

IV.

latter, we betray our Trust; and to be sure they'll triumph, and indeed, with too much Reason conclude (notwithstanding all our Pretensions to the contrary) that in Reality we *can* have no great Regard for *that*, which we can be prevailed with so very easily to give up. We don't consider then what we are about when we give these Men the least Advantage over us. In all Probability they'll make the most of it, and the Ground *we lose, they'll get*. On the other hand, are we zealous and sincere, stedfast and immoveable? Such a Conduct may in Time convince 'em, and so great a Light as that introduced by the Gospel, may, like its Great Author, make even the *Blind to see*. And let us remember that none of us are exempted from this Duty. 'Tis true indeed, " The Ministers of the " Gospel are *especially* required to " shine

" shine as Lights in the World, SERM. IV.
 " because the Distinction of their
 " Station, renders their Conduct
 " more observable, and the Pre-
 " sumption of their Knowledge,
 " and the Dignity of their Office,
 " gives a peculiar Force and Au-
 " thority to their Example. (*And*
how shall they escape, if they neg- Heb. ii. 3.
lect so great Salvation?) " But
 " still, the Light of inferior Chris-
 " tians is also to be visible; and
 " as no Circumstances in Life can
 " place a Man so far below the
 " Notice of the World, but that
 " his Virtues or Vices *will* render
 " him, in some degree, an Orna-
 " ment or a *Disgrace* to his Pro-
 " fession, so there are none below
 " the Obligation, because 'tis a
 " Duty strictly requir'd of every
 " one, high or low, rich or poor,
 " to promote, as far as in him lies,
 " the Credit of it." And the
 greater any Man's Capacity is, the
 greater

SERM.
IV.

greater must be his Improvement in relation to himself, and the more extensive will his Influence probably be, with regard to others. Of such a one it will be expected, that he gives *Light to all that are in the House*; and then he may reasonably hope that he shall not only save himself, but be a means, under God, of *turning many unto Righteousness*; all indeed who have the Benefit of his Advice, and the Advantage of his Conversation *."

Matt.
v. 15.

Dan.
iii. 3.

Let us then, every one of us, in our several Stations and Callings, zealously unite in such a Conduct, as shall at once advance the Glory of God, and the Good of Man. Let us treat every Sin with the Resentment it deserves, and every Offender, (how Great soever) with Reproof and Correction. Then shall Virtue appear amiable as it is, and

* Dr Rogers's Serm. Titus ii. 10.

and Vice be driven to Covert and Retirement. Credit and Applause shall attend Religion, and *Shame* only *be the Promotion of Fools*. On the one hand let us remember, that whatever we do, if for the *temporal*, much more for the *spiritual* Welfare of our Fellow-Creatures, Christ has been pleased to say He will look upon *as done to himself*; and on the other, let us ever bear in mind that tremendous Sentence of his, *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels*.

Consider what you have heard, and may God Almighty grant you *Understanding in all Things*.

SERMON

Understanding in all things.

and may God Almighty grant you

Could I what you have heard

Glory of his Father, with the help

abundant, when he cometh in the

him also shall the Son of Man be

tears and joyful Generation, of

me, and of my Word, in this world.

his, Whosoever shall be ashamed of

in right that unconfessing himself of

and for the world, let us not bear

will that upon us as we do in this

Christ has been pleased to say, He

Wellfare of our fellow-Citizens

Matchless more for the (world)

whatever we do, if for the tempo-

the one hand let us remember, that

only to the (world) of (world)

shall second Religion, and (world)

Reverent Credit and Applause

and we are driven to Court and

is (world) Religion



S E R M O N V .

Misfortune, of some kind or other, the
Lot of every one ; and the Sin and
Folly of judging of Men from the
different States of Prosperity and
Adversity.

Sigh not, nor of the common Lot complain;
Thou that art born a Man, art born to Pain.
'Tis true the gracious Gods are kind at last,
And well reward us for our Sorrows past.

Rowe's *Ulysses*.



SERMON V.

I different States of Prosperity and
Folly of judging of Men from the
lot of every one; and the Sin and
Misfortune, of some kind or other, the
W. Adversity.

And well reward us for our Sorrows past.
Tis true the gracious Gods are kind at last.
I know that are the certain doom to Pain.
Sigh not, nor of the common I do complain;

10 FEB 60

Rowe's Office

ACTS XXVIII. 4.

*No doubt this Man is a Murderer,
 whom, though he has escaped the
 Sea, yet Vengeance suffereth not
 to live.*

IT has been observed by a well
 known, and much admired
 Writer*, and very deservedly so,
 that “we cannot be guilty of a
 “ greater Act of Uncharitableness,
 “ than to interpret the Afflictions
 “ which befall our Neighbours, as
 “ Punishments and Judgments.”
 And yet, I am sorry to remark, that
 this is a Fault, I am afraid, Num-
 bers are guilty of, rashly to con-
 demn before they allow themselves
 Time to consider. It must cer-
 tainly be wrong; the Thing is un-
 reasonable

SERM.
 V.
 }

SERM.

V.

reasonable in itself; bad in its Consequences; and every way unjustifiable. Let but a remarkable Instance of Misfortune, of any kind, happen to any Man, and too many are too apt hastily to pronounce him an abandon'd Profligate; one, utterly unworthy of the least of all God's Mercies, and particularly designed as an exemplary Object of his heavy Displeasure. Thus, as the Context informs us, upon St Paul's Arrival at *Melita*, when the venomous Viper fastned upon his Hand, the Barbarians, like Barbarians, like rude Islanders as they were, immediately concluded, *No doubt this Man is a Murderer, whom, though he has escaped the Sea, yet Vengeance suffers not to live.* When they observed that he had received no manner of Hurt, they then, indeed, soon chang'd their Minds, and the Criminal condemn'd, was thought worthy to be

a God adored. — The Disciples SERM.
V.
themselves seemed to be very much
in this way of Thinking, as ap-
pears from a Question put by them
to our Blessed Saviour, upon a Man's
being brought to him that was born
blind. *Master, (say they) who did
sin, this Man, or his Parents, that
he was born blind?* They took it
for granted, that either the one, or
the other, or both, must necessa-
rily have been notorious Offenders.
Had not this been the Case, so
great a Misfortune (they thought)
would not have happened unto
him; so heavy a Punishment (they
imagin'd) would not have been in-
flicted upon him. *Thus they rea-
son'd, but not aright.* Our Bless- Wisd. ii. 1.
ed Saviour assures 'em, *Neither has
this Man sinned, nor his Parents,*
(that is, not in any remarkable de-
gree) *but that the Works of God
should be made manifest in him.*
His Affliction came not upon him

H

for

SERM. for any personal Sin of his own,
 V. (for he cou'dn't be suppos'd to be
 guilty of any actual Sin before he
 was born) nor yet for any Sin that
 his Parents had committed; but
 that the Works of God *might be*
made manifest in him; both his
 Work of *Power* in *afflicting*, and his
 Work of *Mercy* in *healing* him.

John ix.
 2, 3.

It shall be my present Business
 from these Examples to shew,

First, That 'tis not only absurd
 and unreasonable, but that 'tis also
wicked to judge of any Man, mere-
 ly from the Good or Evil that
 happens to him in this Life. I
 shall carry the Point still further,
 and shew,

Secondly, That it is not only ab-
 surd, and unreasonable, and wicked,
 to cast injurious Reflections, but that
 it is also utterly inconsistent with
 the common Notions of Human-
 ity, and directly contrary to, what
 we

we all seem to value ourselves *upon*, a Principle of Good-nature. SERM.
V.

I am, *first*, to shew, that 'tis not only absurd, and unreasonable, but that 'tis also *wicked* to judge of any Man, merely from the Good or Evil that happens to him in this Life.

To consider that second Causes are only under the Direction of the First, and therefore to believe that *whatever is*, is, some way or other, *right*, is at least a *safe* way of arguing. As long as we observe this Method, we can never err; whenever we deviate from it, great may be our Guilt, and bad the Consequences attending it. That God Almighty can bring Good out of Evil; that by *his* Permission, unlikely Means may produce very great and good Ends, no good Christian will offer to question; and therefore will not presume

H 2

rashly

SERM. rashly to determine, what he can
 V. by no means pretend clearly and
 fully to comprehend. It very often
 happens that the very best Men
 meet with the hardest Fate; and
 it was a noble Sentiment in a Hea-
 then *, that " he could not con-
 " ceive that any thing upon Earth
 " could be so compleatly worthy
 " of God, as a Great and Good
 " Man, greatly miserable, but still
 " greatly supporting himself under
 " his Misery." It is very obvious,
 and therefore we cannot deny, but
 that in general, all Things come
 alike to all; *There is one Event to*
 Eccl. ix. 2. *the Righteous, and to the Wicked:*
 And we have seldom greater Rea-
 son to believe, that *verily there is*
a Reward for the Righteous, and
 Psal. *that doubtless there is a God that*
 lviii. 10. *judgeth the Earth;* than when
 Things happen so promiscuously;
 when Innocence appears so much
 distressed,

* Seneca de Div. Prov.

distrest, and Virtue left with so little to support it. *Marvel not at the Matter*, but rather be assured, that *He that is higher than the* SERM.
V. Eccl. v. 8.

Highest always regards this: These Things *can* never happen but by *His* Appointment, never *will* happen but for *our* Good, unless we ourselves foolishly obstruct, or perversely frustrate the good End and Intention of 'em. Human Success (of itself) is no Mark of the Divine Favour; we may be pleased perhaps when Things happen just as we would have 'em; but we are to *know*, that unless the *Means* used be proper, the *End* proposed can never be prosperous. A compleat, thorough-paced Villain may be as remarkable for his *Success*, as he could ever have been for his *Unworthiness* of it; but if he has his Portion here, he can expect it *only* here. After this, shall we presume to say, that because a Man is *Great*,

SERM. must necessarily be Good? This
V. won't do; the Inference cannot be
 maintained; and there are never
 wanting Instances enow to prove
 it notoriously false. On the other
 hand, because a Man is pinch'd in
 his Circumstances, or unhappy in
 his *Projects*, shall we therefore pro-
 nounce him bad in his *Principles*?
 This we can't answer doing; be-
 cause, we cannot see far enough into
 Things, to know whether it be so,
 or not; consequently, *our* Deter-
 mination must be unwarrantable;
To his own Master he stands or
falls; and who art thou that judg-
est another? It is Solomon's Ob-
 servation, *that the very Prosperity*
of Fools shall destroy them; that
those very Things which should have
been for their Wealth, shall be un-
to them an Occasion of falling, as
 the Psalmist expresses it, (*Psalms*
lxix. 23.) This Aphorism is found-
 ed upon Reason and Experience,
 and

Rom.
xiv. 4.

James
iv. 12.

Prov.
i. 32.

and is too well known to need a SERM.
 Proof. Learn to distinguish true V.
 Happiness from outward Show, and
 remember, that it is not so great,
 so truly noble, to *command* Success,
 as to *deserve* it. *Whom the Lord*
loveth, he chastneth, says St Paul: Heb.
xii. 6.
 Those only are *above* Misfortunes,
 who are able to *bear* 'em. From
 this Observation of St Paul's, 'tis
 plain, that Misfortunes are rather a
 Mark, and a distinguishing Mark
 too, of *Merit*, than the Reverse.
Whom the Lord loveth, that is,
 whom He has a particular Regard
 for, or of whom he takes particu-
 lar Notice, these are the very Per-
 sons He makes Choice of for the
 Trial of Affliction; that others, see-
 ing their good Works, and observ-
 ing their exemplary Patience, may
 thereby be induced to reverence the
 Example, and to *glorify God in the* i Pet.
Day of Visitation; themselves taught ii. 12.
 to do Honour to Religion, in an

SERM. Imitation of their Temper and Vir-
 V. tues.

Since then these Things are so, surely it can be nothing less than a very great Instance of Impiety, arbitrarily to take the Matter out of God's Hands, and to put it into our own. *By what Authority do we this? or who gave us this Authority?* The Word of God is express against it. *Judge not, that ye be not judged. Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking, be put away from you.* It would much better become us to live, and love as Brethren; to take the good Advice of the wise Son of Syrach; *Make not an hungry Soul sorrowful, neither provoke a Man in his Distress. Add not more Trouble to a Heart that is vexed; and defer not to give to him that is in need. Reject not the Supplication of the afflicted; and give him none occasion to curse thee.*

Matt.
xxi. 23.

Matt.
vii. 1.

Ephes.
iv. 31.

1 Pet.
iii. 8.

thee. For if he curse thee in the SERM. V.
Bitterness of his Soul, his Prayer
shall be heard of him that made Ecclus. iv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
him. Our Blessed Saviour himself

expressly says, *I judge no Man;* John viii. 15.
 and again, *I came not to judge the*
World, but to save the World. John xii. 47.

If therefore we propose *Him* as
 our Example, and are desirous of
 walking in *his* Steps, let the Meek-
 ness of the *Master* correct the Mo-
 roseness and Austerity of the *Ser-*
vant; we must be particularly care-
 ful, by no means officiously to con-
 cern ourselves with what doesn't be-
 long to us, or ill-natur'dly to con-
 demn what we have nothing at
 all to do with. All that we have
 to do in this Case, or in any Case
 of this kind, is, *to do unto all Men*
as we would they should do unto us.
 This is the best, and the most ef-
 fectual Method we can take, to
 make our *own* Lives easy and com-
 fortable, and in *some* measure to
 contri-

SERM. contribute to the Peace and Welfare of *others*. This we may hope will secure us Friends on Earth, and let it ever be remember'd, the *Best* of Friends in Heaven; whereas, to behave in a different manner, and to act in opposition to this Rule, can never be reconciled either to Wisdom or Duty; to the Character of a good Christian, or indeed of a tolerably good-natur'd Man.

I'll conclude this Head with reminding you of a Story which probably several of you have read, but may not perhaps just at present recollect. --- " When *Diagoras* the
 " Atheist was on board one of the
 " *Athenian* Ships, there arose a very
 " violent Tempest; upon which the
 " Mariners told him, that it was
 " a just *Judgment* upon 'em for
 " having taken so impious a Man
 " on board. *Diagoras* desired they
 " would look upon the *rest* of the
 " Ships

“ Ships that were in the same Dis- SERM.
 “ tress, and ask’d them, whether V.
 “ or no *Diagoras* was on board
 “ every Vessel in the Fleet? We
 “ are involved in the same Calami-
 “ ties, and subject to the same Ac-
 “ cidents; and when we see any
 “ of the same Species under any
 “ particular Oppression, we should
 “ look upon it as arising from the
 “ common Lot of human Nature,
 “ and not from the Guilt of the
 “ particular Person suffering *.”—

And this, I think, very natural-
 ly introduces our *second* General;
 That it is not only absurd, and
 unreasonable, and *wicked*, to cast
 injurious Reflections, (all which, I
 hope, it has already appeared to
 be) but that it is also utterly in-
 consistent with the common No-
 tions of Humanity, and directly
 contrary to, what we all seem to
 value

SERM. value ourselves *upon*, a Principle of
 V. Good-nature.

Gen.
 ii. 18.

It may be observed, that immediately upon the Creation, God himself vouchsafed to say, that it was *not good for Man to be alone*; from whence we may infer the Necessity of a Relationship; and the great Obligations we are all under, upon all proper Occasions, to be *Helps meet for one another*. Allowing this, it must necessarily be our *Duty* to help in time of Need, and to do one another all the good Offices we possibly can. When Men are in Misfortunes, to take no *notice* of 'em, is very wrong, and highly unbecoming; but to *add* to 'em, and by censorious Reflections to make 'em worse than they otherwise would be, is villainous and base. This is with a witness *to persecute him whom God has smitten, and to vex them whom He has wounded*. The poor Man may cry; the

Psal.
 lxix. 27.

the Man in Misery surely may lift up his Voice, and when he *does* so, he has a *Right* to be heard. We may *mock the Poor*; we may oppress the Injured, but when we do, we *re-* Prov. xvii. 5. *proach our Maker*: We cannot despise the one, without dishonouring the other. Let us consider a little who it is that *made us to differ from* 1 Cor. iv. 7. *others, and what have we that we did not receive?* Now if we did receive it, why do we glory as tho' we had not received it? To whom do we stand indebted for that inestimable Blessing, a good State of Health? an easy Fortune? the Use of Limbs? together perhaps with all the other Comforts and Conveniencies of Life? The Great Disposer of all Things, who has so bountifully provided for us, might, without the least Injustice, have taken the same Notice of *others*, and neglected us, as we should be apt to think: What, then, in a Change of

SERM. of Circumstances, we could fairly
 V. and reasonably have expected from
 others, *that*, in the present Case,
 common Good-nature will oblige
 us chearfully and readily to con-
 tribute to the *Support* of others.

To *apply* this, and what has been
 suggested, to the Case now before
 us. -- Are our Brethren afflicted?
 They *are* Brethren; *In all their*
 Isa. lxiii. 9. *Affliction we should be afflicted.*
 Has it pleas'd God in any parti-
 cular Instance to distress 'em? We
 should endeavour to make their
 Yoke easy, and their Burden light.
 We should not conclude that they
 are *Sinners*, because they are *Suf-*
ferers; that God is *against* 'em,
 because, at present, his Hand is
heavy upon 'em. We should not,
 upon any Account, even *suppose* it,
 unless we have the greatest Reason
 to *believe* it. Because the Man in the
 Parable lost *one* Sheep, are we there-
 fore

fore to infer that he had no Right to the other Ninety nine? This is a very unfair way of arguing; a way of proceeding, that Reason and Religion will very much condemn, but can by no means approve of. Suppose a Man in the most pressing Circumstances, in the greatest Want, should apply to us for Relief, and assure us, that by an unexpected, an unavoidable Accident, he had lost all that he had in the World. Suppose he should undertake to convince us by plain and undeniable Demonstration, that this *was* an accidental Thing, and that he himself was by no means accessory to the Loss he had sustain'd. In this Case what should we do? I know what we *ought* to do; immediately to relieve him; which if we *refus'd* to do, and were *able* to do, we could no longer have any Pretence to the Character of Christians or Men. Purposely to *evade* the melan-

SERM.

V.

melancholy Object, barbarously to insult him, and sneeringly to tell him that this was nothing more than *the due Reward of his Deeds*, would be in the highest degree ungenerous, base, and cruel. No Man would offer to do *this*, but the Man who wou'dn't scruple to do *any thing* : The Christian would detest it ; the Man of Sense would scorn it ; the Good-natur'd Man *cou'dn't* do it : No ; *He* would rather weep with him who had so much reason to weep. His compassionate Concern, his generous Sympathy wou'dn't long lie conceal'd ; like the affectionate, tender-hearted Joseph, his Bowels would yern upon his Brother. A very correct Writer observes *, that *Compassion generally, almost always indeed, follows any considerable Misfortune*. This Civility is so very common, and so much expected, that they who

Rom.
xii. 15.

Gen.
xlii. 30.

* Collier's Essay on General Kindness.

who are unconcerned at the Trou-
bles of another, are called *inhu-*
mane; that is, they are degenerat-
ed from their Kind, and don't de-
serve the Name of Men. The same
Author has observed too, *that the*
most generous Dispositions are the
most compassionate. "Such Persons,
" tho' their Fortunes are never so
" well guarded; tho' the Great-
" nefs of their Minds exempts them
" from Fear, and makes 'em *least*
" concerned for any Accident of
" their *own*, yet none condole and
" sympathize more heartily than
" they. 'Tis plain therefore, that
" this Pity and Tendernefs, being
" so void of Self-Interest, must
" proceed from a humane Dispo-
" sition, from a noble and gene-
" rous way of Thinking." --- The
Stoics indeed, those stern *Philoso-*
phers, as *they* think themselves, are
so far from accounting Mercy a
Virtue, *that according to the Vogue*
I of

SERM. of *their* Morality it passes for a
 V. Sin; “ for an Argument of Weak-
 “ ness and Littleness of Soul, and
 “ such a piece of Softness and Ef-
 “ feminacy, as doesn’t comport with
 “ the Character of *their* wise Man,
 “ who is allowed indeed to *relieve*,
 “ but not to be *troubled* for the
 “ Afflicted; to add, if he can, to
 “ the Tranquillity of their Minds,
 “ but not to suffer his *own* to be
 “ discomposed at the Sight of any
 “ Calamity *.” Let ’em, if they
 can, enjoy their ill-natur’d Conceit,
 their morose, rigid Severity. Thank
 God, *we have not so learned Christ*.
 Let a different Perswasion, a better
 Principle, influence *our* Actions, and
 let us not believe, (as *they* do) that
 to *debase* human Nature is to *im-*
prove it. No; let *us* rather, first,
 freely contribute our own Endea-
 vours, and then beg of God, in the
 Words of our most excellent Litur-
 gy,

Ephes.
 iv. 20.

* Stackhouse’s Body of Divinity, P. 912.

gy, to comfort and succour all those SERM.
V.
who in this transitory Life are in
Trouble, Sorrow, Need, Sicknes, or
any other Adversity.

It follows from what has been
observ'd, that in another World,
good and bad Men will for ever
be distinguished by suitable Re-
wards and Punishments; for in *this*
'tis very plain that there's a great
deal of Darknes and Perplexity
upon the Face of Things; and Vir-
tue and Vice are utterly uninter-
pretable by Success. "The Fate
" of the Righteous and Wicked is
" shuffled in common and promif-
" cuous Events, as if the Distinc-
" tions of Good and Evil were
" nothing but empty Names, and
" Terms of Philosophy *." Nay,
sometimes, pretty often indeed, "a
" Man fares the *worse* for his Inte-
" grity, and they who are righte-
" ous make themselves a Prey,
I 2 "meerly

* Collier's Sermon 2 Cor. v. 10.

SERM. “ meerly by *being* so. Their Vir-
 V. “ tue is discountenanc’d and op-
 “ prest; they are persecuted in
 “ their Fortune and in their Fame;
 “ they are often pursued with a
 “ Succession of cross Accidents, and
 “ a Struggle with the most unac-
 “ ceptable Difficulties and Misfor-
 “ tunes of Life.” But tho’ Provi-
 dence sometimes (for very wise and
 good Ends, no doubt,) suffers Vir-
 tue and Vice to be so unsuitably
 treated *here*, yet at the *last* Ac-
 count all these things will be rec-
 tified, and every one’s Condition
 adjusted to the Merit of his Cause.
 For then (as the Prophet speaks)
Judgment shall run down like Wa-
ters, and Righteousness like a mighty
Stream.

Amos
v. 24.

I would observe, secondly, that
 by an unequal and partial Dispen-
 sation of Good and Evil, Rewards
 and Punishments in this World, the
 Goodness of God very visibly dis-
 plays

plays itself with regard both to SERM.
good and *bad* Men. First, as to V.
good Men. Were they always re-
 warded for their good Works as
 soon as they are done, this would
 be apt to make 'em too fond of
 the World; and rather incline 'em
 to take the Apostle's Advice in the
Reverse, and *set their Affections*,
 not *on Things above, but on Things* Col. iii. 2.
on the Earth; whereas, nothing
 more powerfully, more effectually,
 weans 'em from it, than Troubles,
 Crosses, and Disappointments. *Be-*
fore I was troubled I went wrong, Psal. cxix. 67.
but now have I kept thy Word:
 And our Blessed Saviour himself,
the Captain of our Salvation, was
 made *perfect through Sufferings*. Heb. ii. 10.
 And the very nature of the Cove-
 nant God has made with us re-
 quires, that good Men in *this* World
 should be as well expos'd to Suf-
 ferings, as qualified to receive Bless-
 ings. But if good Mens Actions

SERM. were always *immediately* rewarded,
V. as there could then be no place
for the Exercise of their Meekness,
their Patience, their Resignation,
their Forgiveness of Injuries; all
which, tho' never so much out of
Fashion, and the last of them in-
deed, Forgiveness of Injuries, seem-
ingly *quite* so, are yet Virtues pe-
culiarly Christian, (and not at all
the less so for being but little re-
garded;) so there would be no
Trial of their Sincerity to God,
and how long, and how much, they
would be contented to do, and
suffer, for *his* Sake, and in *his*
Cause.-- Then as to *wicked* Men,
they have great Reason to thank
God for his Forbearance; for in
sparing them when they deserve
Punishment, and in his Wrath
thinking upon Mercy, He not only
gives 'em *time* to repent, but kind-
ly *invites* 'em to it, and lays before
'em the most prevailing Arguments
to

to melt 'em into Tears for having
offended so gracious a God; a God
so full of Mercy and Compassion;
and to break off their Sins by a
speedy Return to their Duty. Be-
sides, let *them* who have the Im-
pudence to complain that God de-
lays to punish the Wicked, remem-
ber, that was not *Mercy* as well as
Judgment to be found in the Di-
vine Nature, the most Righteous
of all must not dare to appear be-
fore Him.

SERM.
V.

Upon the whole. --- *As Gold is
tried in the Fire, so are accepta-
ble Men in the Furnace of Adver-*
sity. * “Adversity is the only true
“Touchstone to try the Value of
“the Soul. It sets a Man’s Vir-
“tues in the truest Light; puts
“’em on the richest Dress; and
“thus he makes a much more
“considerable Figure than he would
“otherwise do. And even suppos-

Ecclus.
ii. 5.

I 4

“ing

* Collier’s Sermon Philipp. iv. 6.

SERM.

V.

“ ing the Evils we labour under,
“ *not* to proceed from the niceness
“ of our Imagination, but to have
“ some *real* Foundation in Na-
“ ture, yet, when we consider,
“ how much the Advantage will
“ over-balance the Inconvenience,
“ this, one would think, should
“ silence our Discontent, when we
“ consider, that if we don't mis-
“ manage the Opportunity, we are
“ now in the fairest way to grow
“ wiser and better, and to be re-
“ markable for the most valuable
“ Improvement our Nature is ca-
“ pable of; when we consider,
“ how great and graceful a Thing
“ it is, to be contented with a lit-
“ tle; to be *above* Contempt, con-
“ scious we don't *deserve* it; to
“ endure Pain without Impatience
“ or Disorder. Thus, to overlook
“ the Malice and Impertinence of
“ ill Men; to throw off the *lesser*
“ Evils of Life with little or no
“ No-

“ Notice, and to bear the *greater* SERM.
“ with Decency and Composure; V.
“ this is to be Great *above* Title
“ and Fortune:” This will make
us easy here, and happy here-
after.

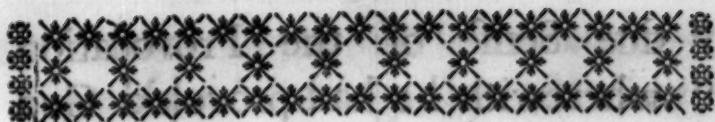
Which God grant thro’ the Me-
rits and for the Sake of his dear
and ever-blessed Son. *Amen.*



"Notice, and to bear the greater
 "with Decency and Composure;
 "this is to be Great above Fate
 "and Fortune:" This will make
 us only here, and happy here-
 after.
 Which God grant thro' the Me-
 rit and for the sake of his dear
 and ever-blessed Son, Amen.

10 11 60





S E R M O N VI.

*David's Guilt in the Matter of
Uriah, and the Efficacy of Re-
pentance.*



P S A L M LI. 3.

*I acknowledge my Transgressions,
and my Sin is ever before me.*

THIS Psalm, for so the Title SERM. VI.
informs us, was compos'd
by *David*; “ occasion'd by the
“ Rebuke receiv'd from *Nathan*,
“ for the notorious Offences, and
“ scandalous Transgressions he had
“ committed in the Matter of
“ *Uriah*; for which, being truly
“ humbled *, and brought to a
“ due

* Dr *Adam Littleton's* Sermon upon the same Text.

SERM. " due Sense of the Provocation
 VI. " wherewith he had provok'd God
 " to Anger against him; of that
 " great Scandal, and ill Report he
 " had brought upon Religion;
 " besides the manifest Injury he
 " had done to a Subject, his poor
 " Neighbour; he breaths out his
 " Complaint, and declares his Pe-
 " nitence in this Psalm; which
 " therefore he appointed for pub-
 " lic Use, as a solemn Form for
 " such Occasions; and to *that*
 " End, deliver'd it to the Chief
 " Musician, to be us'd among the
 " Church Devotions." His Adul-
 tery is mention'd in the Inscription,
after he had gone in unto Bathshe-
ba, it is there said; and his Mur-
 der of the Husband is expressly
 lamented in the 14th Verse; *De-*
liver me from Blood-guiltiness, O
God: Which plainly shews, that
 the Blood of the innocent *Uriah,*
 spilt by *his* Order and Contrivance,
 lay

lay heavy upon his Conscience.— SERM.
Wherefore, having by *Nathan's* VI.
Address been convinc'd of his Sin,
with the sincerest Signs of Contri-
tion he supplicates to Almighty
God for Forgiveness. *Have Mercy*
upon me, O God, after thy great
Goodness; according to the Mul-
titude of thy Mercies do away mine
Offences; wash me thoroughly from
my Wickedness, and cleanse me from
my Sin: For I acknowledge my
Transgressions, and my Sin is ever
before me. He knew that Confes-
sion was the surest, indeed the *only*
way, of obtaining Mercy. *He that*
covereth his Sins shall not prosper,
but whoso confesseth, and, in conse- PROV.
quence of that, forsaketh them, shall XXVIII. 13.
have Mercy.

The Best may err; even the Man
after God's own Heart, we find,
did so; and greatly too. We should
not, on the one hand, be too severe
in our Reflections, or, (quite un-
like

SERM. like the Great God whom we have
 VI. the Honour to serve,) *be extream*
 Pfal. *to mark what is done amiss*; nei-
 CXXX. 3. ther on the other, thro' a fashio-
 nable Complaisance, must we dare
 to screen the Guilty, how Great
 soever; the latter of these can ne-
 ver serve the Cause of Religion;
 the former of 'em, will be very
 apt to discourage a Return to Duty.
 Let those who *fall* like *David*,
 like *David*, *rise again* by Repent-
 ance.

In my following Discourse upon
 the Scripture before us, I shall,
First, represent to you the Enor-
 mity of his Sin; and then,

Secondly, From *his* Example, re-
 commend to you the Acknowledg-
 ment of Transgressions, or the Con-
 fession of Sin, whenever you fall
 into it, as an indispensibly neces-
 sary Duty of Religion.

Now

Now the State of the Case, to which we at present refer, as it stands recorded in sacred History, was this. *David* had unfortunately 'spied a beautiful Object; in an improper Place, and at an improper Time. Tho' a *King*, he was still but a *Man*; tho' he had the Command over *Thousands*, yet it is plain, in *this* Particular at least, he had none over *himself*. The Woman, we are inform'd, *was very* ^{2 Sam. xi. 2.} *beautiful to look upon*. The King could not resist so great a Temptation; so strong, so prædominant was his Passion, that he was determin'd, it seems, at all Events, to indulge it. In Cases of this Nature, proper, or rather, more properly speaking, *improper* Persons, are seldom wanting to be applied to. Accordingly, *David* soon dispatches his trusty Messengers; without much Difficulty obtains the wish'd-

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wish'd-for Prize, (the good Woman was too *complaisant* to *refuse* so great an Honour as the King design'd her,) in short, without the least Reluctance, as far as we can find, (for we must state the Case fairly,) he *possesses*, what he could not, upon any Account whatever, have any manner of *Right* to. — We may now look upon the Monarch, as, (in his *own* Opinion, at least) compleatly happy; at present, he meets with no Interruption, no Difficulty, nothing to discompose, or ruffle him. We may, we *must* suppose, that he had, some way or other, (how we can't tell,) quieted his *Conscience*, in order, in some measure, to justify his *Conduct*. This was for a little while only; he had not long been acquainted with the *Woman*, before he was acquainted likewise with the *Consequence* of his Acquaintance with her: For, tho' Wife to
Uriah

Uriah the *Hittite*; yet, (*horrendum dictu,*) she was with Child by *David* the King. How to proceed *now*, he couldn't very well tell. Not only the *Wife*, but the injur'd, and much abus'd *Husband* is *now* to be thought of. With a seeming Friendship, and out of a great Regard to his past Services, (a very great Regard indeed!) he sends for his loyal Subject. --- *Uriah*, little thinking how much his Master had abus'd him; in what a tender Part he had wounded him, and how deep the Wound; knowing nothing of the Matter, obeys the Order, immediately upon receiving it. The King, no doubt of it, was glad to see him. After a few Questions ask'd, *viz.* as, *How Joab did, how the People did, and how the War prosper'd*, he advises him to retire; to go and refresh himself after his Fatigue.

Uriah's Behaviour, (as far as we can collect from Scripture,) seems

K

to

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to have been, in all respects, un-
exceptionable. Here it is *parti-*
cularly so; *remarkably* generous.
The Ark, (says he,) and Israel,
and Judah, abide in Tents, and my
Lord Joab, and the Servants of
my Lord, are encamp'd in the open
Fields; shall I then go to my
House, to eat, and to drink, and
to lie with my Wife? As thou
livest, and as thy Soul liveth, I
will not do this Thing. Here was
a *Disappointment* indeed; very bad
is the Method now to be taken:
Uriah's past Services are all en-
tirely forgotten; and he, an honest,
innocent Man, *without any Offence*
or Fault of him, publicly expos'd
to unavoidable Danger, and its
Consequence, immediate Death.--
So that from Adultery we are to
pass on to Murder. A very easy
Transition! for, should there be
Occasion for it, the *Adulterer,* as
well as, according to *Solomon's* Ob-
servation, the *Adulteress,* will hunt
for

Pfal.
lix. 3.

the Efficacy of Repentance. 131

for the precious Life. When a SERM. VI.
Man has once no more Conscience than to commit the one, he Prov. vi. 26.
will not, 'tis much to be fear'd, be
very scrupulous as to the Commis-
sion of the other. — This was
the Case here however.

Thus fell this Great, and in
other respects, remarkably good
Man, a Prey to his ungovernable
Lust; hereby leaving us a memo-
rable, tho' at the same Time a very
melancholy Instance, of the very
great Frailty and Imperfection of
human Nature, even in the very
best of Men. — But *the Thing that* 2 Sam. xi. 27.
David had done, displeased the
Lord. Very heinous was the Na-
ture of his Crimes, and terrible to
reflect upon the Consequences of
'em. — To bring him back to a due
and proper Sense of his Duty; to
awaken his Conscience, which we
may well suppose (as has been
just observ'd,) had long been
K 2 artfully

SERM. artfully lull'd asleep; *to reprove*
 VI. *him, and to set before him the*
 Pſal. l. 21. *Things that he had done,* the Pro-
 phet *Nathan*, by a Direction from
 Providence, humbly begs Admit-
 tance, and an Audience; and wise-
 ly steers between the two opposite
 Extreame, *that* of a too daring *Pre-*
sumption on the one hand, and of
 an unmanly, timorous *Diffidence* on
 the other. Had he been too sud-
 den, or too severe in his Reflec-
 tions, this Usage the King might
 have resented; had he been too
 remiss, or too favourable in repre-
 senting the Case, so blind was the
 King, at that Time, that 'tis very
 probable he might not have seen
 thro' it. The particular manner in
 which he introduces his Reprimand,
 is well worthy our Observation. The
one little Ew-lamb which the poor
Man had bought and nourish'd up,
 was so strong, so lively a Descrip-
 tion of the Wife, whom *Uriah*, his
 true

true and faithful Subject, had once SERM. VI.
 so dearly lov'd, that, I think, the King could not but apply it; and tho' he seem'd so highly exasperated against the Person in the Parable, must yet be fully perswaded that he himself was the *very Person* intended by it. But be this as it will; no sooner had the Prophet in plain Terms told him so, *but*, without one word of Defence, he pleads Guilty, and allows the Accusation to be just; acknowledges the Fact, and earnestly expresses his Concern for it: *Thou art the Man*, 2 Sam. xii. 7. says the Prophet; and immediately replies the King, *I have sinned* Ver. 13. *against the Lord*. Tho' a King, he did not think himself too great to be reprov'd, but, with a highly becoming Modesty, and a thorough Conviction of his Crime, *meekly acknowledg'd his Vileness, and truly repented of his Sins.* — The Jewish Doctors undertake to *justify* this

SERM. VI. Behaviour of *David's*, by saying, that it was a Law in *Israel*, that when a Man went to the Wars, he should leave a Bill of Divorce with his Wife; and that then she might freely marry whom she pleased in his Absence: That *Bathsheba* took the Advantage of this Liberty, and married *David*. — But why should they excuse, or rather (for that is all,) pretend to excuse, a Crime, which the Scripture condemns in so many Places; and which *David* himself confess'd and bewail'd with so many Tears? We have Scripture Authority for it, that great was *David's* Sin, so great, as no otherwise to be atton'd for, but by a full Confession, and a very sincere, hearty, and timely Repentance. The *Efficacy* of which, I come now, as was proposed under the *second* Head, to consider.

Now

Now as I well know there are many, who from misunderstanding that Text of St Paul, *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, in a desponding kind of way, have imagin'd, that all their Endeavours would be ineffectual, and that they can never do *enough* to save their Souls; so I likewise know, there are others, who think in quite the opposite way; make themselves extreamly easy; and seem fully perswaded, that they shall get to Heaven with doing very little, or, in some Cases, hardly any think at all. Both these Extreame are equally dangerous, and either of them may, in the End, be fatal. The one is Insolence, Arrogance, and Presumption; the other, such a Diffidence, such a Distrust, as a Christian should not so much as think of.

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Things are liable to Corruption; and the better they are in themselves, the * worse when they are corrupted. Thus, as we have just had Occasion to observe, the *Scripture* itself, tho' given by *Inspiration of God, and profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*; has by some been wrested to their *Destruction*; but, take it in a proper manner, and as it ought to be taken, and it will every way fully answer the Ends and Purposes for which it was intended; that is, it will make us *perfect*, as perfect as we are requir'd to be, *thoroughly furnish'd unto all good Works*; it will give *no Man licence to sin*; nor will it exclude any one from Hopes of Pardon, who, when he *has sinn'd*, repents. Thus in that well-known good and

merci-

2 Tim.
xvi. 17.

2 Pet.
iii. 16.

Ecclus.
xv. 20.

* *Corruptio optimi fit pessima.*

merciful Act recorded in the Eighth of St John. *The Scribes and Pharisees brought to our Saviour a Woman taken in Adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, This Woman was taken in Adultery, in the very Act. Now Moses in the Law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stoop'd down, and with his Finger wrote on the Ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lift up himself, and said unto them, He that is without Sin among you, let him cast the first Stone at her. And again he stoop'd down, and wrote on the Ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own Consciences, went out, one by one, beginning at the Eldest, even to the last. And Jesus was left alone,*

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SERM. *alone, and the Woman standing in*
 VI. *the midst. When Jesus had lift*
up himself, and saw none but the
Woman, he said unto her, Woman,
where are those thine Accusers?
Has no Man condemned thee? She
said, No Man, Lord. And Jesus
said unto her, Neither do I con-
demn thee; go, and sin no more.
 Her Accusers had us'd their ut-
 most Spite and Malice to aggra-
 vate her Crime; (which, God knows,
 there was no manner of Occasion
 for, it was bad enough without
 that;) our blessed Lord, however,
 to convince them that the Gospel
 Dispensation was not so rigorous as
 that of the Jewish, freely absolv'd
 her; but, with this strict Injunc-
 tion, *to go, and sin no more.* One
 particular Sin, indeed, we read of
 unpardonable, which is, that of
 Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.
Verily I say unto you, All Sins
shall be forgiven unto the Sons of
Men,

*Men, and Blasphemies wherewith so-
ever they shall blaspheme; but he that
shall blaspheme against the Holy
Ghost hath never Forgiveness, but
is in danger of eternal Damnation;
because they said, He hath an un-
clean Spirit:* That is, because, tho'
they saw, yet they attributed his
Miracles to the Power of the De-
vil. This we cannot now, in the
strictest Sense, be guilty of; so that,
I believe, I may safely venture to
affirm, that every Sin, if duly ac-
knowledg'd, and atton'd for by a
sincere, and hearty Repentance, is
properly term'd *Venial*; and no
Sin, I apprehend, is any *otherwise*
Venial than as Repentance makes
it so.

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Mark iii.
28, 29, 30,

Great, beyond Conception, is the
Goodness of God to his sinful
Creatures; ever studious of their
Welfare; ever mindful of their
Happiness. This Happiness has been
once forfeited: God was pleas'd
to

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VI.

Pfal.
ciii. 3.

Rom.
viii. 1.

to renew his Covenant, or Agreement with us ; to *forgive all our Sin, to heal all our Infirmities. There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* Nothing can now make us unhappy, but an obstinate, wilful, settled Disobedience. For, tho' we *may* not have been so good as we *ought* to have been, and, I'm afraid, in *every* Particular, very few *are*, yet, many are the Instances in Scripture of God's readiness to forgive. The Prodigal Son, and the Thief upon the Cross, are indisputable Proofs of it. St *Peter* thrice *denied* our Lord ; yet no sooner returned with Signs of Sorrow, but was most graciously receiv'd ; *wept bitterly* indeed, but soon were his Tears wip'd away. If *Abab*, tho' a remarkably bad Man ; so bad, as even to *sell himself to work Wickedness in the Sight* of

the Efficacy of Repentance.

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of the Lord; and made worse too SERM. VI.
by the Arts and Contrivances of
a wicked *Jezebel*; yet, if *Ahab*
shall but *humble himself*, and shew
the least Signs of Contrition, it
shall have such an effect, that there
shall be a Respite; the Punishment
shall be suspended; and *the Evil*
threatned shall not be executed in
his Days, but in his Son's Days
shall the Evil be brought upon his 1 Kings
xxi. 29.
House. This was the Case under
the Law; and in the Gospel, which
is a most noble *Improvement* of the
Law, our Blessed Saviour expressly
says of himself, we have his own
divine Word for it, that *He came*
not to call the Righteous, but Sin- Matt.
ix. 13.
ners to Repentance.

Let the Wicked then forsake his
Way, and the unrighteous Man his
Thoughts, and let him return unto the
Lord, and he will have Mercy upon
him, and to our God, for he will abun- Isa. lv. 7.
dantly pardon. He will have Mercy
upon

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upon him; that is, He will not be like offended Mortals, who having once receiv'd an Injury, or, perhaps, only imagining so, are implacable, so that no Submission, no Satisfaction, will content them; but *God*, upon your turning to *Him*, will turn to *You*; He will not exercise the Severity of his Justice upon you, but will compassionate, and pity you; and if you *are heartily sorry for your Misdoings*, and promise for the Future to be better, tho' you have justly forfeited his Favour, and incurr'd his Displeasure, yet, upon your Repentance and Conversion, He will be merciful to you; not only forgiving, so far as not *punishing* you, but receiving you too into his Grace and Favour; being as fully reconcil'd to you, as if you had never offended him at all. --- And as the main Scope and Tenor of our Saviour's Doctrine when on Earth, was Repentance to All, be-
cause

cause All have need of it; so, when SERM. VI.
he was dead, and risen again, he
ordered the same still to be continued in his Name. For, appearing to his Disciples, after his Resurrection, he said to them, among other Things, that *Repentance, and Remission of Sins*, as the *Effect* of it, *should be preach'd among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* Luke xxiv. 47.
And that they might have *full Power* to do it, He himself, immediately before his Ascension, gave them that Power. And therefore, it must needs be our *Wisdom* as well as *Duty*, to study all the Arts and Means we can possibly find out to get our Sins pardon'd, and so, our Obligation to Misery and Punishment disannull'd. And it must be very necessary, highly proper, to consult the Word of God, to know what he would have us do, in order to so great an End. For, as none can pardon our Sins, but
He

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Ephes.
v. 17.

He against whom they are committed; so none but *He* can tell us upon what Terms he *will* pardon them. And if we apply ourselves to the sacred Writings, there we shall *understand what the Will of the Lord is*; and shall find, that the proper Requisites are, *Repentance, whereby we are to forsake Sin, utterly to renounce it; and Faith, whereby we are stedfastly to believe the Promises of God*; which, upon the Terms there laid down, abundantly assure us of a Reconciliation.—Without producing a number of Texts, (and a very great number *might* be produc'd,) I shall observe to you, that the true State of the Case is this. *The Soul that sinneth, it shall die. The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, neither shall the Father bear the Iniquity of the Son. The Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the*

the Wicked shall be upon him. But if the Wicked will turn from his Sins that he has committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his Transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mention'd unto him; in his Righteousness that he has done, he shall live. Have I any Pleasure at all that the Wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should rather turn from his Ways, and live? Certainly, a most merciful way of Proceeding this! An Act of Indemnity, only for acknowledging that we have offended, provided, we offend no more. Cheap Remittance! Here 'twould not be receiv'd. But, after all, be not deceiv'd, God is not, and will not be mocked; for, whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap: He that soweth to the Flesh, shall

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Ezek.
xviii. 20,
21, 22, 23.

SERM. *of the Flesh reap Corruption; but*
 VI. *he that soweth to the Spirit, shall*
of the Spirit reap Life everlasting.

Gal. vi.
 7, 8.

Luke
 xiii. 3.

As we know our Lord's Will, happy are we if we do it; but if not, we shall receive a greater Condemnation. *Except we repent, we shall undoubtedly perish; a Place will be assigned us in the nethermost Hell.*

Heb.
 iv. 13.

Let us therefore (the only way to prevent this dreadful Evil,) seriously consider *with whom we have to do.* Let this Consideration engage us punctually to perform our Duty in every particular Branch of it. Let us but prove ourselves *Good*, and consequently we must be *Happy*; for the Angels themselves are *happier*, because they are *better*. Tho' we have but a bare Subsistence here, let us be perfectly well satisfied, for *Godliness is great Riches*. Tho' some are not afraid openly to deny the *Being* of a God,
 nor

nor others, who profess to believe him, in Works to deny him: Yet will we, like a *Lot*, or a *Joshua*, stedfastly adhere to our Resolution; we'll expel the Infection from our own House; we will not think Virtue less venerable because despis'd, nor Vice less sinful or destructive, because of its numerous Votaries: No; *in thy Fear will we worship toward thy holy Temple.*

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Titus
i. 16.

Psal. v. 7.

What a Satisfaction must it have been to an eminently distinguish'd Prelate * of our Church, to have heard, upon his Death-Bed; what was then said of him by one of the Chief of his Order; "*There goes one of the greatest, and one of the best Men, that ever England bred.*" Let us but deserve a good Character, and then, though perhaps *not here*, (for that is uncertain,) yet *hereafter* we shall enjoy, certainly enjoy the Reward of it.

L 2

Men

* Bishop Beveridge.

SERM. Men may not give us our Due, but
VI. God infallibly will.

Heb.
iv. 16.

To conclude :

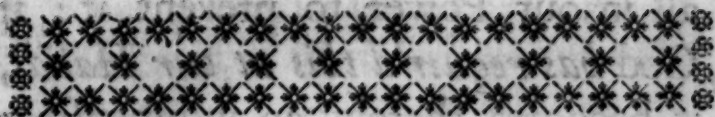
Let us come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, humbly and earnestly implore the divine Assistance; and beg of God, in the Words of the Royal and truly penitent Psalmist, to try us, and seek the ground of our Hearts; to prove and examine our Thoughts; to look well if there be any way of Wickedness in us; and to lead us in the Way everlasting. Let us beseech him to grant us true Repentance and his holy Spirit, that those Things may please him which we do at this present, and have been doing; and that the rest of our Life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal Joy, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psal.
CXXXIX.
23, 24.

10. EE 60

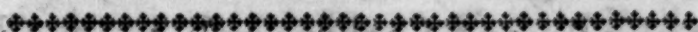
1 Tim.
i. 17.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.



S E R M O N VII.

A CHARITY-SERMON recommending the religious Education of Youth.



M A T T. XVIII. 14.

It is not the Will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little Ones should perish.

IF this be true, and true it must SERM.
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certainly be, for these are the Words of our Blessed Saviour himself, if it be true, that *it is not the Will of our Father which is in Heaven, that one of those little Ones should perish*; if, on the contrary, we are strictly oblig'd to do

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all in our Power to prevent it; if
 God *has requir'd this at our Hands*,
 it becomes thereby an indispensible
 Duty. And I can't help giving it
 as my Opinion, that all those who
 are very well *able*, but only not
willing to contribute to the good
 Education of Children, are, in this
 respect however, whatever they may
 be in others, bad Christians, bad
 Subjects, and I believe will be found
 to be, bad *Members* of any Chris-
 tian Society. For, "the bare *Pro-*
fession and *outward* * *Appear-*
ance of such a Religion as the
 Christian is, if taught in any to-
 lerable Purity, *must* have *some*
 right Influence; and the Body
 of a People cannot go the ut-
 most Lengths in Wickedness,
 whilst that Appearance *subsists*.
 "What

* Archbishop of Canterbury's Sermon (when Bishop of Oxford) before the Incorporated SOCIETY for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts: Preach'd in the Parish Church of St Mary le-Bow, 20th February, 1740-1.

“ What Lengths they *might* go in
“ Time, if it were *lost*, as we have
“ not experienced, we are not apt
“ to consider. But a little Reflec-
“ tion on the Number and Strength
“ of human Passions, and the A-
“ bilities we have of finding means
“ to gratify ’em, should give us a
“ high Value of whatever has any
“ peculiar Force to restrain ’em.”

Now, this is the Work of Reli-
gion, which will civilize the *Man*,
at the same time that it improves
and *adorns* the *Christian*. ’Tis
Religion, I say, that must teach
Men how to behave themselves;
for *without* it, I believe we all think
there would be hardly any such
thing as living at all. If then, Re-
ligion will make Men better Sub-
jects than they would otherwise be,
and a more valuable Part of So-
ciety; if it will make ’em more
friendly and obliging to one ano-
ther, and happier in themselves,

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surely, the sooner they are acquainted with it the better. Now I'll undertake to make it appear, that it *will* have this Effect; that is, that a right, religious Education, such a one as it is now my particular Business to recommend, and such a one as I hope we are all here met with a full Design to promote and encourage, I'll undertake to make it appear, that such an Education will most probably make those who have the great Advantage of it, much more useful to the *World* than they would otherwise be, and happier in *themselves*. And if I *do* make it appear, then I doubt not but you'll agree with me, that we should by no means *despise one of these little Ones*, but, so far from it, contribute our utmost Endeavours to make 'em useful here, and happy hereafter.

And

And *first*; A due and proper Sense of Religion, will, in all Probability, make these Children better, and more useful Members of Society, than they would be *without* it.

Reason and Religion should Both be cultivated and improved to the utmost; and Youth is the proper Season for Instruction. 'Tis a pretty "Observation *, and beautifully "expressed, that other Creatures ar-
"rive, without their own Care, at
"the small Perfection they are ca-
"pable of, and there stop; but
"the whole of *Man's* Existence
"that appears, is a State of Dis-
"cipline and Progression. Youth
"is his Preparation for maturer
"Years: this whole Life for an-
"other

* Archbishop of *Canterbury's* Sermon (when Rector of *St James's Westminster*,) before the University of *Oxford*, at *St Mary's*, on *Asc Sunday* in the Afternoon, *July 8, 1733*.

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“ other to come. Nature gives the
 “ *Abilities* to improve, but the ac-
 “ tual Improvement we are to have
 “ the Pleasure and the Merit of
 “ giving ourselves, and one an-
 “ other. Some Minds indeed, as
 “ some Soils, may be fruitful *with-*
 “ *out* Cultivation; others, barren
 “ *with* it; but the general Necess-
 “ sity is the same in both Cases;
 “ and in both, the richest, and
 “ most capable of producing good
 “ Fruit, will be overrun, if neg-
 “ lected, with the rankest and worst
 “ Weeds.” Whatever may have
 been suggested to the contrary, ’tis
 very necessary that young People
 should *set out* right, and be pre-
 judic’d *in favour* of Religion. ---
 Naturally, *the Thoughts of the Heart*
 Gen. vi. 5. *are only evil continually.* But, Rea-
 son, duly improved, and Religion,
 properly practis’d, will bring Good
 out of Evil, and keep *them* within
 due Bounds, who without the Ties
 of

of Conscience and Duty, might admit of no Restraint. Human Laws, tho' in themselves ever so good, and ever so well executed, yet, without the Sanction of divine ones, might perhaps be very little regarded by the Lawless and Disobedient. I dare say, the Dread of an *eternal* Death has made many *good*, on whom the Fear of an almost certain *temporal* one would have had very little Effect. And I can easily guess at the Consequence, if once Men can be brought to think, that for any Crime they can commit here, they shall be punished *only* here. --- Religion then will in a great measure prevent *Extreams*. --- It will likewise be a Curb upon the Passions, and give a Check to *less* Extravagancies. Instead of being dissolute and idle, loose and disorderly, *picking and stealing*, they, who are under the Direction of *that* Light, will know that they are oblig'd

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2 Theff.
iii. 10.

oblig'd by it (for it is one of the first Things taught 'em) *not to covet or desire other Mens Goods, but to learn and labour truly and honestly to get their own Living, and to do their Duty in that state of Life to which it has pleased God to call 'em; and that if they will not work, neither must they eat.* --- Religion will tell 'em this. It will teach 'em too, a dutiful Submission to their Superiors; a decent, respectful Behaviour to their Equals, and, *if they have any*, an affable, courteous Carriage to their Inferiors. It will engage 'em in the first Place, to *fear God*; in the next, to *honour and obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him.* --- Now these are great Advantages to set out with in Life; and may be serviceable thro' every Part of it. And tho' we are far from saying that *all* make a right Use of 'em, 'tis well known that *ma-*

ny

ny do; and some, indeed, from these low Beginnings, have very greatly distinguished themselves. On the contrary, there are, no doubt of it, out of so great a Number, some that have been educated in this way, and have afterwards turned out very bad. And is there a School in *England*, notwithstanding, in many Instances, the very great Expence attending it, where the Case is not the same? The *main Point* to be consider'd, is, what the Institution is in itself; whether the Design be truly laudable, and whether the *Advantages* arising from it, will not bear a much more than *equal* Proportion to any *Inconveniencies* that can attend it. And if, upon the whole, it be determined (as I think it necessarily must,) in favour of the former, a few Objections should have no weight at all. But a Charity of this kind seems to me almost unexceptionable. Children are introduced

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introduced to these Schools very young; at a Time when they'll take almost any Impression. Proper Persons, properly qualified, are to instil into 'em proper Principles: They are taught, (and the Duty is frequently inculcated,) *to have always a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.* Possibly, as we have just observ'd, the Seed sown may meet with a bad Soil; and in that Case it may either die, or, (which is much worse) bring forth Weeds fit only for the Fire; that is, it may either have no Effect at all, or a bad one. But it may likewise fall upon good Ground, and then *bring forth Fruit, in some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred;* different degrees of Improvement, according to the different Capacities and Inclinations of the Persons instructed.

Matt.
xiii. 23.

Now, as I apprehend, the Question in debate will pretty much turn

turn upon this, *viz.* Which are SERM. VII.
 most likely to behave themselves as they should do, those, who at the best have a very mean, imperfect Notion (and perhaps none at all) of the Being of a God, and an eternal future State of Rewards and Punishments, in which they shall receive an eternal Allotment, according to what they have done, be it good or bad; or those, who have been *early* educated in a firm *Perswasion* of these important Truths, and from their very Infancy have been taught the absolute Necessity of a conscientious Observance of 'em? Have we any Reason to think that they, who have no regard to the *first and great Com-* Matt. xxii. 38, 39.
mandment, should look upon the *second, which is like unto it*, as more obligatory? or is it likely, that they should be good Neighbours, who don't so much as know what their Duty to their Neighbour is?

In

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VII.

In short, upon all Accounts Religion should be encourag'd; as perfective of human Nature; productive of Happiness present and future; a true Friend to Government in general, and to every Member of it in particular. And I'll produce you two Instances which may serve not only to illustrate, but to prove the Point now before us.

Gen.
xxxix.

What think ye? Could any thing but Religion have kept *Joseph* within proper Bounds, and prevented a sinful Compliance with the Inclinations of his forward Mistress? He does not think, (at least we don't find he does) of any bad Consequence that may happen to him with regard to *Potiphar*, who, by the By, was no less a Person than *Pharaoh's* Counsellor, and a Captain of the Guard too; or, that should there be a Discovery, it might ruin his Interest at Court; he does not think of *that*; (which, in all Proba-

Probability, would be one of the ^{SERM.} ^{VII.} first Things thought of now;) the only Reflection is, after, as we may well suppose, having laid his Hand to his Heart, *How can I do This great Wickedness, and sin against God!* How can I be guilty of Disobedience to That God, who has so signally preserved me, or of Ingratitude to That Master who has taken so much Notice of me! To His Religion then we must ascribe His Innocence; without the former, we have great Reason to think there would have been very little of the latter.

When *Abraham* came and dwelt at *Gerar*, 'tis obvious to remark, that He had a very difficult Part to act there. The Case was this; The People of the Place, you must know, were Heathens; and consequently, thought Fornication no Crime at all, but at the same Time look'd upon Adultery to be a Sin of a very

M

heinous

SERM. heinous and aggravating Nature.
 VII.

Gen. xx.
 11.

But as great and as heinous a Sin as they took it to be, *Abraham* could by no means think himself safe! *Because I thought, surely the Fear of God is not in This Place, and they will slay me for my Wife's Sake.* I dare say you plainly perceive, upon the bare mention of the Thing, that the only Reason *why* He didn't think Himself safe, was, Because the Fear of *God* was not in the Place. What will *They* stick at who live without *God* in the World. --- Let This put the finishing Stroke to our First General; proceed we to the

Second, That a due and proper Sense of Religion, will, in all Probability, not only make These Children better, consider'd as Members of Society, but likewise happier in Themselves, both here and hereafter. And first, as to their Well-being in *this* World.

There

There is no Peace, saith my God, SERM. VII.
 to the Wicked. They are like the Isa. lvil. 20, 21.
 troubled Sea when it cannot rest; so
 far then as you prevent their being
 Wicked, so far you'll prevent their
 being miserable even Here. There
 is nothing like an even, steady Course
 of right Conduct from the First. It
 will make *That* easy, which, begun
late in Life may be attended with
 great Difficulties. It is truly said
 of Wisdom, which, in the Place to
 which I refer, is but another Word
 for Religion, that *Her Ways are* Prov. lii. 17.
Ways of Pleasantness, and all her
Paths are Peace. --- To be Good
 then is to be Happy. --- Now Hap-
 piness is the End of human Actions,
 and one way or other, every one
 is, or however *thinks* he is, in pur-
 suit of it. But for the Attainment
 of true and solid Happiness, there
 is one, and only *one Thing needful*;
 there is one, and only one Road
 that leads to it; 'tis attainable only
 M 2 by

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by a Performance of our Duty, and arises from a conscientious Approbation of our own Conduct. In *other* Things there may be the *Appearances* of it, but wherever the *Shadow* may be, *here*, and *here* only, is the *Substance*. Nature is consulted, and *Fortune* cares'd, to make us Happy. Antiquity is call'd in to our Assistance, and the several Plans of Philosophy presented to our View. The most hazardous Voyages are undertaken in quest of this valuable Treasure; and the Products of remotest Countries imported to compleat our Felicity. But, come to
 Ecclef. xii. 13. *a Conclusion of the whole Matter, and to fear God, and to keep his Commandments* will be found to be *the whole Duty of Man*; the whole of his Duty, and, by a direct Consequence, the whole of his Happiness.

Pf xxxiv,
11.

Come then, ye Children, and hearken unto me, I will teach You the Fear of

of the Lord; I will inform you and SERM. VII.
 teach you in the Way wherein ye Pfal. xxxii. 9.
 shall go, and point out to you true
 and lasting Happiness; such Happiness as This World cannot give;
 and such as it cannot take away. ---
 In the first Place then, have always
 upon your Minds a grateful Sense
 of the Obligations you are under to
 your generous Benefactors; to Those
 who provide for your Education;
Esteem Them very highly in Love for 1 Thess. v. 13.
their Work's Sake, and look upon 'em
 (under God) as the best Friends
 you have in the World. Then,
 pay a dutiful Regard, and observe
 a submissive Behaviour to Those by
 whom you are instructed; and *believe*
 'em when They tell you, (for 'tis
 very true) that the *Happiness* of
 your Lives will entirely depend upon
 the *Goodness* of 'em. Let the
 Tenets of Religion, in every Branch
 of it, make a lasting Impression, and
 don't be *Hearers* only, but *Doers* James i. 22.

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of the Word. Consider the *End* of your Creation; and what you were sent into the World for; *Love the Lord your God with all your Heart; with all your Mind; with all your Soul; and with all your Strength;* and as you advance in Life, and come to be engaged in it, lay it down as a fundamental Principle, an inviolable Rule, *to do unto all Men as you would They should do unto you.*

2 Pet. i. 8. *If these Things be in you and abound, they will make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* I will not say, that in a wicked World, so wicked a World as *This* is, they will infallibly make you *Great*, but they'll make you *Good*, which is far better; and tho' it may not be in your Power to command Success, you'll do more, you'll *deserve* it. But in general *Godliness has the Promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that which*

1 Tim.
iv. 8.

is to come, and the Husbandman SERM. VII.
 that laboureth must be first Partaker VII.
 of the Fruits. Who is he that will 2 Tim. ii. 6.
 harm you, if ye be Followers of that 1 Pet. iii. 13.
 which is Good? "A * general

" Esteem is itself a real Protection.

" The Injuries offered to a good

" Man will be resented with an uni-

" versal Detestation, and every Man's

" Hand will be armed against him

" who inflicts 'em. The Villain

" himself feels a secret Impression

" of Awe, when he approaches so

" venerable a Character; he cannot

" injure him without some Remorse,

" and his Hand strikes with Reluc-

" tance." But, and if it should

happen otherwise; if notwithstanding

all your Care and Innocence, the

Malice and Wickedness of Men

should return Evil for Good, and

persecute you for doing your Duty,

you may then take to yourselves

this great Satisfaction, this comfort-

M 4 able

* Dr Rogers's Sermon, 1 Pet. iii. 13.

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able Reflection, that you suffer in a good Cause, and are entitled by the Promises of the Gospel to a distinguish'd Measure of Reward in a future State. Then shall ye receive the Reward of your Deeds, and be happy, inconceivably so, in a glorious Immortality. Then shall ye hear the joyful Sentence, *Come, ye blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World!*

As for the Encouragers of this Charity, who are zealous and hearty in the Cause of Religion, who *de-*
 Pfal. lxxii. *fend the Children of the Poor*, and
 4. have sincerely at Heart their Interest both Temporal and Eternal, the Lord Almighty prosper you, *I wish*
 Pf. cxxix. *you good Luck in the Name of the*
 8. *Lord.* I needn't assure you, I hope you know it yourselves, that you cannot lay out your Money to *great-*
er Advantage; neither can ye pay
 a greater

a greater Regard to *Him*, who has SERM. VII.
 shewed the *greatest* for you. *Inas-*
much as ye have done it unto one of Matt. xxv. 40.
the least of these my Brethren, ye
have done it unto me, are his own
 exprefs Words. And in another
 Place, *Whosoever shall receive one* Mark ix. 37.
of such Children in my Name, re-
ceiveth me. But our blessed Saviour
 frequently took particular Notice of
 Children, and when *his Disciples*
rebuked those that brought them, He
was much displeased, and instead of
 applauding, reprimands their offi-
 cious Zeal, and *that too*, with a
 kind of Warmth, (a thing very un-
 usual with him) *Suffer the little* Mark x. 14.
Children to come unto me, and forbid
them not, for of such is the Kingdom
of God; then, by his outward *Ges-*
ture and Deed, He declared his Good-
will toward them, for He embraced
them in his Arms, laid his Hands
upon them, and blessed them. Now,
let the same Mind be in you which Phil. ii. 5.
 was

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VII.

also in Christ Jesus; let the Good-nature of the Master recommend it to the Servant, and let us endeavour to imitate Him, who has left us an Example purposely that we should follow his Steps. And only observe, that if to save Life even here, be a Satisfaction almost inexpressible, Words can hardly reach it, what must that be, to save a Soul from the bitter Pains of eternal Death hereafter? and if, as we are well assured, there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth, or one Soul saved from Death, more than over ninety and nine just Persons that comparatively need no Repentance, much may They expect, and great shall be Their Reward in Heaven, who shall contribute their Endeavours, in proportion to their Abilities, towards the saving if it were only One of Those Little Ones.
Earth

Luke xv.
7.

Earth must approve the Deed, and Heaven will reward it. SERM.
VII.

Yes, Heaven *will* reward it; and we have great Reason to think that in the next World Charity will be much more considered than any other Virtue whatever. We have Reason to believe, that it will be the main Point upon which we shall be examin'd; and that our Acquittal as to Neglects in other Points of our Duty will depend very much (tho' by no means altogether, take Care of That) upon our being able to give a good Account of ourselves in This. And I dare say you remember, that *St Paul*, in one Verse mentions Faith, Hope, Charity, *these Three*, and in the same assures us, that *the greatest of These is Charity*. And in that very Chapter he tells 1 Cor. xiii. us, that *though he should give his Body to be burnt*, that is, as the Words are generally understood, *though he should die in the Cause,*
and

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and for the Sake of Christ, yet, if he *hadn't Charity, it would profit him nothing.* In short, so many are the Encouragements given to the Practice of this Virtue, that the Time would fail me even to mention them. In almost every Page of the sacred Oracles of God we are reminded of the Tenure by which we hold the Blessings of his Providence, and our Obligation cheerfully to resign them to every Demand of Charity. Your own Recollection will observe to you how frequently it is commanded; and your Piety, I am much inclin'd to think, will not suffer you to forget, with what Warmth and Earnestness it is there recommended. In one Place, *He that hath Pity upon the Poor* is said to *lend to the Lord*, (and what an Honour is that?) Besides, *look, what he layeth out it shall be paid him again.* In another, *For this Thing the Lord thy God shall*

Prov. xix
17.

Deut. xv.
10.

shall bless Thee in all thy Works and SERM. VII.
in all that Thou puttest thine Hand VII.

unto. In a third, God is not un- Heb. vi. 10.
righteous, that he will forget your

Work and Labour which proceedeth
of Love ; and in a fourth, Scarcely
for a righteous Man would one die, Rom. v. 7.

yet peradventure for a good Man
some would even dare to die. In

which Text we may observe, that
 by a *righteous* Man, is meant a
 strictly just, honest Man ; but by the
good Man we are to understand, the
 Generous, the Good-natured, the
 Charitable, the Benevolent one.

As we have therefore Opportunity
let us do Good unto all Men, and Gal. vi. 10.

especially unto Those who are of the
Houſhold of Faith ; ſuch as theſe
Children are, Sons and Daughters
of the Lord Almighty ; 2 Cor. vi. 18.
 Servants un-

der one common Maſter ; *Fellow-*
heirs, and of the ſame Body ; and Eph. iii. 6.
Partakers of the ſame Promise in
Chriſt by the Goſpel.

Don't

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Don't let me forget one Thing, which is this;—If you'll consult your Prayer Book, you'll find, that in the Order for *The Visitation of the Sick*, the Minister is strictly charged earnestly to move such sick Persons as are of Ability to be liberal to the Poor. — Now if we have Reason to think (which we certainly have) that what we give, even at a Time when we can scarce properly be *said* to give, will yet be accepted, how much greater Reason have we to think that what we give *now* will be accepted? *Now*, when we can enjoy it ourselves; *take our Ease, Eat, Drink, and be merry?* Luke xii. 19. The *former* we believe may have *some* Merit in it, but the *latter* we are sure will not lose its Reward even *here*. For only consider; When a Man can look back upon his past Life, and upon a fair Survey with Comfort reflect, that there are many Instances of his Charity in

in *this* World, who will appear as SERM.
 so many Advocates for him in the VII.
 next; when such a Man comes to
 die, when the *Sorrows of Death* Pfal. xviii.
compass him, when the King of Ter-³
 rors stares him in the Face, and the
 Time of his Dissolution draweth
 near, this one Reflection well-
 grounded, will be a much greater
 Satisfaction to him, and do him in-
 finitely more Good, than all the
 Things in the World besides. It
 will *comfort him when he lieth sick* Pfal. xli.
*upon his Bed, and make all his Bed*³
in his Sickness. It will speak Peace
 to his Soul, and perhaps give Ease
 to his Body, when nothing else can.
 And if so, then I think the above
 Reflections must necessarily carry
 along with 'em the Conviction of
 this Truth, (which I'll beg Leave
 once more to remind you of, and
 conclude) that they *that are Rich* Luke xii.
in this World cannot be so to better^{21.}
 purpose than by being *Rich towards*
 God,

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God, by laying up for themselves Treasures in Heaven, and purchasing a Crown which never will fade; and a Glory which will not decay. And if even the poor Widow's two Mites, which made but a Farthing; (but that indeed was much more *then* than it is *now*) were so well accepted that our Lord declared *she had cast in more than they all*; this must be matter of great Encouragement to them who have but little, *gladly to give of that little, for so will they certainly gather to themselves a good Reward in the Day of Necessity.* Then shall they *shine as the Brightness of the Firmament*, and for having contributed their Endeavours to *turn many unto Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever.* The Bread which they have cast upon the Waters shall be found after many Days, and in the Prophet's Phrase *that which was at first a Wilderness shall become a fruitful*

Mark xii
43.

Tob. iv.
8, 9.

Dan. xii.
3.

Ecclef.
xi. 1.

Isa. xxxii.
15.

fruitful Field. Because they have given *Light to them* that might otherwise have *sat in Darkneſs*, and been loſt in *Obscurity*, *Their Light* alſo, when it ſhall ſtand 'em in the greateſt *Stead*, ſhall ſhine before *Men and Angels*; and their *Father* which is in *Heaven* ſhall not only ſee, but reward their good *Works*, and for ever *make 'em glad with the Joy of his Countenance.*

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VII.

Luke i.
79.

Pſal. xxi.
6.

I doubt not but you will conſider what you have heard, and both for God's Sake and your own do ſomething for *Him* who has done ſo much for *you*.

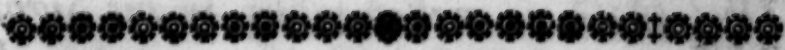
And may *the God of Peace* who brought again from the *Dead* our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, that great *Shepherd of the Sheep*, through the *Blood of the everlaſting Covenant*, make you perfect in every good *Work* to
N do

SERM. *do his Will, working in you that*
VII. *which is well-pleasing in his Sight,*
through Jesus Christ; to whom be
Glory for ever and ever. Amen.



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SERMON

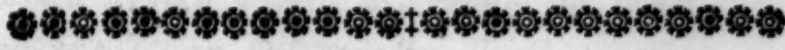


S E R M O N V I I I .

The Certainty of Death, and the absolute Necessity of a proper Preparation for it.

Knowing the Frailty of our Lives, and the Certainty of our Dissolution, let us by Repentance and Holiness so prepare ourselves for Death, as to make it only a happy Transition from a temporal to an eternal Life, and an Inlet into endless Bliss and Joy.

SPINCKES'S *Devot. Saturday Evening, the Decad.*



SERMON VIII.

The Certain
late Necell
proper Prepara-
tion for it.



Knowing the Futility of our lives, and the Certainty
of our Disolution, let us by Repentance and
Abstinence prepare ourselves for Death, so to make
it only a happy Transition from a temporal to an
eternal Life, and an End to endless Bliss and
Joy.

Spencer's Discourse, Sermon, the Dead.



JOB XXX. 23.

*I know that thou wilt bring me to
Death, and to the House appointed
for all Living.*

MAN that is born of a Woman SERM
VIII
has but a short Time to live,
and is full of Misery; he cometh
up and is cut down like a Flower,
he fleeth as it were a Shadow, and
never continueth in one stay; and if
so, happy for him, if he is but up-
on his Guard, and takes Care to
behave himself as he shou'd do, that
when a few Years are come, he shall
go the Way whence he shall not re-
turn.--- The Words just now read
to you very naturally offer some
serious Thoughts and Reflections
upon the Certainty of Death. A

SERM.
VIII.

Job xiv.
14.

Psal. xci.
7.

Subject, which by frequent Reflection we should make familiar to us;

All the Days of our appointed Time should we wait till our Change come.

For God will certainly bring us to Death, and to the House appointed for all Living. But as all are agreed in this, that as from Dust they came, so unto Dust shall they return; as no one wants to be convinced of it, a Thousand falling beside us, and ten Thousand at our right Hand, I would for this Reason rather choose to wave it, and taking it for granted, would observe another Method, and shew,

First, That the only way to die as we would do, is to live as we should do. The Effect which such a Conviction should have upon us should be this, It should make us live every Day, as if we every Day expected to die.

And

And first, The only way to die SERM. VIII.
as we *would* do, as, when the Time comes, notwithstanding our present seeming Indifference, we shall all be glad to do, is to *live* as we ought to do; the only way to make Death not terrible, is always to have in View the sure and certain Hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life.

If Men could get to Heaven only by wishing to be there, they would not then, I presume, make Hell their Choice. If the Life of the Wicked would but end in the Death of the Righteous, upon these Terms perhaps they might think Salvation worth having. But, let 'em be assur'd, that as great as is the Difference between Life and Death, Light and Darkness, bitter and sweet, or any direct Contraries, full *as* great is the Difference, the immutable and eternal Difference, between Virtue and Vice, Good and Evil; and the Consequences of the one, they may

N 4 depend

SERM.
VIII.Gen. iv.
7.Psal. lviii.
3.1 Cor. xv.
22.

depend upon it, will be the very Reverse of those that attend the other. *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou dost not well, Sin lieth at the Door,* are the very Words that proceeded out of the Mouth of God himself. So that the Authority we go upon, is nothing either more or less, than the Word of that God, who, as he cannot deceive others, so neither will he be deceived himself. --- 'Tis very certain, that Man, as soon as he was born, went astray, and according to the Articles of the first Covenant, merited Death. But then, 'tis as certain, that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ may all be made alive. And we can never sufficiently admire the remarkable Contrast between the first and the second Adam; between the Damages sustained by the one, and the Benefits derived from the other; as also between the Demerit of the former,

former, and the Merit of the latter. SERM.
VIII.
 —After a Refusal of proffered Happiness, Man is again taken into Favour, and once more, *Rectus in Curia*. Then he's told how to proceed; in what manner to behave; and what Method to observe; and according to his Behaviour here, so is his Reward or Punishment to be hereafter. And nothing is expected from him but what he is sufficiently enabled to perform, nor any thing prohibited, but what it is his Interest as well as Duty to decline. He does not serve an austere Master, but a God *whose Compassions* Lam. iii.
22. *fail not*, who is desirous of the Good and Welfare of his Creatures, and not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the *Knowledge*, in order to the *Practice*, of the Truth. But, though He *wills* Man to be happy, he will not *force* him to be so. The Rules he has laid down must be carefully observ'd,

SERM. observ'd, and as God has command-
 VIII. ed, Man must obey. A Perform-
 ~~~~~  
 ance of Duty shall indeed be enti-

Heb. xii. tled to Reward, but *without Holi-*  
 14. *ness no Man shall see the Lord;*

Gal. vi. 7. and *whatsoever a Man soweth, that*  
*shall be also reap*; and nothing can  
 be plainer, than the many Texts in  
 Scripture directly tending to this  
 Point. 'Tis true indeed, when na-  
 tural Reason was the only Guide in  
 Matters of Religion, then, Man had  
 not so plain a Path to walk in. The  
 Light of Nature was not strong  
 enough, It could not remove  
 Doubts, it could not give Satisfac-  
 tion, even to those who had the best  
 Heads, and the most honest Hearts;  
 who were indefatigable in their Pur-  
 suit after Truth, and only desir'd to  
*know* the right Way, in order to  
 walk in it. But now, *that Life and*  
 2 Tim. i. *Immortality*, which was in vain  
 10. sought after in the Paths of natural  
 Wisdom, are brought to *Light thro'*  
 the

*the Gospel*; the Words of eternal SERM. VIII.  
Life are there full and clear, and Habak. ii.  
*he may run that reads them*; and Luke x. 28.  
no Man can lose his Way, but by Luke xiii. 27.  
resolving not to find it. *Do this*,  
*and thou shalt live*; and on the  
other hand, *I know you not: depart*  
*from, me all ye Workers of Iniquity*;  
are Words that can admit but of one  
Construction; and 'tis Madness as  
well as Folly, to hope to be sav'd,  
and yet resolve to be Wicked. For  
God has given *no Man License to* Ecclus. xv. 20.  
*Sin*, nor will he suffer any to go  
unpunish'd, who shall dare to vio-  
late his most sacred Laws. -- *Strive*  
(says our blessed Lord) *to enter in at* Luke xiii. 24.  
*the straight Gate*. The Word here  
used, is, *αγωνίζεσθε*, which implies  
a great deal, and must certainly be  
understood to signify at least as much  
as this; contend earnestly; use your  
utmost Endeavours; and let nothing  
on your Part be wanting, to enter  
in at the straight Gate. It is called  
straight,

SERM.  
VIII.

straight, because that Course of Life and Actions which is to carry a Man to Heaven is straight; that is, it is unpleasing to Flesh and Blood, and by no means agreeable to Mens sensual Appetites; and it is likewise called *narrow*, which, in the *Greek*, is *afflicted*; because a Man in this Way must expect to meet with a good many Crosses, Disappointments, and Temptations; all of which as he is *enabled*, he is *required* to overcome; and even a favourite Sin, though it be but *a little one*, must be parted with, and your Soul shall live.

What shall we say then to those, our Friends in the Church of *Rome* for Instance, who, upon Terms, are ready to allow Indulgencies to the Living, and Masses for the Dead. Undoubtedly they have their Reasons for it, known to themselves, and perhaps to *others*, as well as themselves. But certainly they *make the*

Mark vii.

13.

*Word of God of no Effect, through these*



Prepare to meet thy God. 189

these Traditions ; and seem idly to imagine, that the Kingdom of Hea-

SERM.  
VIII.

ven, (as *Simon Magus* did, that the Gift of the holy Ghost) may be purchased with Money. But it cannot

Acts viii.  
20.

be. The Soul that sinneth, it shall die. The Son shall not bear the In-

Ezek.  
xviii. 20.

iquity of the Father, neither shall the Father bear the Iniquity of the Son ; the Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the Wicked shall be upon him.

Every Man has Duty enough of his own to do, and Sins enow of his own to answer for, and no Man may presume to deliver his Brother, or make Atonement unto God for him.

Psal. xlix.  
7, 8.

No, it cost more to redeem their Souls, so that he must let that alone for ever. In the Sight of God even the

Angels themselves are charged with

Job iv. 18.

Folly. And in another Place, Be-

hold, even to the Moon and it shineth

Job xxv.

not, yea the Stars are not pure in his Sight. How then can Man be

justified

SERM.  
VIII.

*justified with God, or how can he  
be clean that is born of a Woman?*

When we have done our utmost, and all that is commanded us, even then we are to subscribe ourselves *unprofitable Servants*; and that we have done nothing more than what was strictly our Duty to do. For, as the eleventh Article expresses it, *we are accounted Righteous before God, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith; and not for our own Works or Deservings.* 'Tis by Grace we are saved *through Faith*; and that not of ourselves, 'tis the Gift of God, not of Works, lest any Man should boast; any Works whatever, and not only those of the Ceremonial Law. Not that Works are not necessary, for they are absolutely so. But the meaning of this Text is, that even good Works *themselves* are not meritorious of themselves; 'tis entirely owing to the free Grace of God that we

Eph. ii.  
8, 9.

we are enabled to perform 'em, and SERM.  
VIII.  
to his great Goodness that he will accept 'em *when* performed. In short, we may argue as long as we will, but this will be found to be the Conclusion of the whole Matter: God Almighty has been graciously pleased to *open the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers*, and they that *will, may* enter in. But if, though we have the Light, we will not believe in the Light; if, though *Light is come into the World*, we love *Darkness rather than Light*; if, to speak plain, we are determined to be miserable, why, miserable we must be. But still, we cannot be so but by Choice; and before we can prefer Death to Life, and the Torments of Hell to the Joys of Heaven; before we can make such a monstrous Choice; though endued with Reason, we must entirely give it up, and presumptuously act in a direct Defiance of it. 'Tis  
here



SERM.

VIII.

here we are to determine; and the Seeds that are sown here, will either turn to Chaff, and be burnt with unquenchable Fire, or else, (which is much to be wished) *be gathered into the Barn*, and bring forth Fruit unto eternal Life. To shew the great, the absolute Necessity of taking proper Care in this Case, and in Time to provide for Eternity, is the Business of our second general.

Matt. xiii.  
30.

I thought of such a thing no more than of my dying Day, is a very *weak*, though a very *common* Expression. This, though perhaps seldom *in* our Thoughts, ought however never to be *out* of 'em.-- If we consider *how short our Time is*, and what is to be done in *this* Life, to make sure of a better, we shall soon be convinced, that we have no Time to lose, but that every Moment is to be improved to the greatest Advantage.

Pf. lxxxix.  
46.

vantage. Consider too what a number of Enemies always upon the Watch. Passions within, turbulent and headstrong; Temptations without, many and great; and with the utmost Caution, and all the Virtue we can boast, 'tis difficult, very difficult, I believe, so far to command the one, as always to prevent their being overcome by the other. Tho' in the main we are ever so careful, yet, if we happen to *sleep*, that is, if we are ever so little off our Guard, this Opportunity the *Enemy* takes to *sow Tares*; and indeed, every Opportunity of every kind, he gladly embraces, and generally makes the most of.---A very great Stress should be laid upon This. --- If our Enemy is so industrious, so indefatigable to ruin us, as we know it, surely we should exert ourselves in proportion, and as we are able, resolve to baffle him. It *may* perhaps, in some Cases, be a difficult Task, but it

O

*must*

SERM.  
VIII.

Matt.  
xiii. 25.

SERM.  
VIII.

*must* be done; and the sooner we begin, the sooner we shall end; and the more violent *his Attack*, the greater will *our Conquest* be. A great deal depends upon a well-weighed Resolution, and 'tis a great Point gained to set out right. For let it be observ'd, that in the Christian Life there's no such thing as standing still. Not to get *forward*, is to go *backward*; and to neglect the Means, is to forget the End.--- It may be true, perhaps, that 'tis never too late to mend; and 'tis equally true, that to defer our Duty is dangerous, as well as totally to neglect it, fatal. The uncertainty of Life, and the many unforeseen, unavoidable Accidents that happen, should always remind us of the Certainty of Death; and if 'tis *appointed for all Men once to die, and after Death the Judgment*; 'tis impossible to take too much Care of That Part, which, either  
in

Heb.  
ix. 27.



in Happinefs or Mifery, is to live SERM. VIII.  
 for ever. And who can tell *what* Prov. xxvii. 1.  
*a Day may bring forth, or what*  
*fhall be to-morrow?* That we fhall  
 die, indeed, we all know; but of  
*the Day and the Hour knoweth no* Mark xiii. 32.  
*Man.* Some we fee, who feem, as  
 it were, to be in *no Peril of Death,*  
*but are lufly and ftrong;* and yet Pfal. lxxiii. 4.  
 even of Thefe there are, who by  
 an intervening Providence are not  
 permitted to live out half their Days.  
*Like the Grafs, in the Morning green*  
*and flourishing, in the Evening cut* Pfal. xc. 6.  
*down, dried up, and wither'd.* To-  
 day they may promife themfelves all  
 imaginable Security; think they have  
 Health laid up for many Years, *take*  
*their Eafe, eat, drink, and be mer-*  
*ry;* To-night, by a folemn Call of  
 God, their Souls *may be required* Luke xii. 19, 20.  
*of 'em.* And is all this true? and  
 is Life fo very precarious and un-  
 certain? and *what Man is he that* Pfal. xxxiv. 12.  
*lufteth to live?* who indeed can  
 O 2 live,

SERM.  
VIII.

live, but the Man who dares to die? who is indifferent to Life, and not at all afraid of Death. And where shall we find him? *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright;* there you'll see *that* Peace which this World cannot give, *that* Satisfaction which it cannot take away, and heartily wish that your present, as well as future State, might *be like his*. And that these Reflections may appear to you to be well grounded, give me Leave to illustrate them in a few Instances. *You have heard of the Patience of Job.* In extream Misery, and under the acutest Pains both of Body and Mind, This was the Comfort, the only Comfort that refreshed his Soul. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself,*

James  
v. 11.

*myself, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, tho' my Reins be consumed within me.* SERM.  
VIII.

The Meaning of which, if you'll please to take it in the Paraphrase of a very Learned Commentator, is as follows: " I, says *Job*, am a dying  
" Man, and my Hopes (with re-  
" gard to this World) are dying;  
" but He, that is, my Redeemer  
" liveth, and that for ever; and  
" therefore tho' I die, yet He, both  
" *can* and *will* make me live again  
" in due time, tho' not in This  
" World, yet in the *other*, which is  
" much better: And tho' I am  
" now highly censur'd and con-  
" demn'd by my Friends and others,  
" as a great Dissembler, and a se-  
" cret Sinner, whom God's Hand  
" has found out; yet there is a  
" Day coming, when my Cause  
" shall be pleaded, and my Name  
" and Honour vindicated from all  
" these Reproaches, and my Inte-



SERM.

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“grity be brought to light; and  
 “This I do confidently expect and  
 “hope for, tho’ at present my Case  
 “seems desperate; my very inward  
 “Parts being consum’d with Grief;  
 “and tho’, as I have said, the Grave  
 “and the Worms will consume my  
 “whole Body, not excepting the  
 “very Reins, which seem to be  
 “safest, and furthest out of their  
 “reach.” To the same never-fail-  
 ing Remedy St Paul had recourse;  
*Behold, says he, I go bound in the*  
*Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing*  
*the things that shall befall me there;*  
*save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth*  
*in every City, saying, that Bonds*  
*and Afflictions abide me. But none*  
*of these things move me; neither*  
*count I my Life dear unto myself,*  
*so that I might finish my Course*  
*with Joy, and the ministring which*  
*I have received of the Lord Jesus,*  
*to testify the Gospel of the Grace of*  
*God. They could not deter him*  
 from

Acts xx.  
 22, 23, 24.

from his Duty. Nay, so far was he from being afraid of Bonds, that he defies even Death itself in its most frightful Form. — Thus St Stephen; *I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right Hand of God.* Then, like his Blessed Master, he prays for his Murderers; *Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge; and when he had said this, he fell asleep;* triumphing in the Hopes and Prospects of his Religion, and rejoicing that he was counted *worthy to suffer for the Name of Jesus.* — Nothing but a good Life could have given him this Courage at the Hour of Death; unless he had lived *the Life*, he could not in so eminent a manner have died *the Death of the Righteous.*

If then so much depends upon our Behaviour here, let us immediately determine to *set our House in Order, lest we should die, and*

SERM.  
VIII.

Acts vii.

Isa.  
xxxviii. 1.

SERM. *not live*; to survey the little World  
 VIII. within us, and see what Order,  
 what Condition we are in. The  
 Time allow'd us for this great Work  
 cannot be long, but may be short.

2 Cor. vi. *Now then is the accepted Time, now*  
 7. *is the Day of Salvation.* Therefore,  
*make no long tarrying to turn unto*  
 Eccles. *the Lord, and put not off from*  
 v. 7. *Day to Day.* In David's Words  
 to his Son Solomon, upon another  
 Occasion, *Let us arise and be do-*  
 1 Chron. *ing, and the Lord be with us.*  
 xxii. 16.

Now unto Him in whose Hand  
 are the Issues of Life and Death,  
 who can kill, or make alive, save,  
 or destroy; to the Eternal God,  
 whose Seat is in the Heavens, and  
 whose Kingdom ruleth over all; to  
 the King of Kings, and Lord of  
 Lords, be ascrib'd, as is most strict-  
 ly due, all possible Adoration, all  
 that a Creature can any way pay  
 to his Great Creator, throughout  
 all Ages, World without End. *Amen.*



# S E R M O N IX.

The horrid Nature of a fallacious, dissembling Infincerity.

P S A L. CXX. 2.

Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from lying Lips, and from a deceitful Tongue.

P S A L. XII. 3.

The Lord shall root out all deceitful Lips.

P S A L. V. 9.

There is no Faithfulness in his Mouth ; their inward Parts are very Wickedness.

P S A L. XIV. 5.

Their Throat is an open Sepulchre ; with their Tongues have they deceived.

P S A L. XXXI. 20.

Let the lying Lips be put to Silence, which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully, speak against the Righteous.

P S A L. LXIV. 8.

Their own Tongues shall make them fall.

P S A L. VII. 9.

O let the Wickedness of the Ungodly come to an End, but guide Thou the Just.

P S A L. CXX. 3.

What Reward shall be given or done unto thee, thou false Tongue.

— *Hic niger est; hunc Tu Romane caveto.*

*HORATII Satyrarum Liber primus.*

No Enemy is half so much to be dreaded as a false Friend.

*Court Secret.*

# SERMON IX

The Lord's Prayer of a faithful Christian

Text CXX

Text XII

Text V

Text XIV

Text XXXI

Text XIV

10 FEB 60

Text CXX

Text CXX

Text CXX

Text CXX



PSALM LV. 12, 13, 14, 15.

*It is not an open Enemy that has done me this Dishonour, for then I could have born it.*

*Neither was it mine Adversary that did magnify himself against me, for then, peradventure, I would have hid myself from him.*

*But it was even Thou, my Companion, my Guide, and mine own familiar Friend.*

*We took sweet Counsel together, and walked in the House of God as Friends.*

**T**HESE Words primarily refer SERM. IX.  
to *Absalom's* execrable Villainy, when in Pursuit of the Life and Crown of his Father *David*.  
The particular Person of whose Insincerity *David* here so loudly complains,



SERM. IX. plains, is *Ahitophel*. One, on whom he had conferred many signal Favours, and who, as to all outward Appearance, seemed to make a very grateful Return. But here lies the Iniquity of the Thing. He was by no means what he *pretended* to be. A vile, treacherous Conspirator, under the specious Disguise of a true and loyal Subject. And to compleat his Villainy too, he must put a *religious* Stamp upon it. *We took sweet Counsel together, and walked in the House of God as Friends.*— Not to enter into any further Particulars, I beg Leave to treat of the Words in a general View, and to represent to you,

*First*, The Meanness and Malignity of a fallacious dissembling Insincerity. I shall,

*Secondly*, Observe, that no Crime more highly reflects upon the Dignity of our Nature.

I am,

I am, *first*, to represent to you the Meanness, and very great Malignity, of a fallacious, dissembling Infincerity. SERM.  
IX.

And that it takes its Rise from the very Pit of Hell, that its the Devil's Invention, is plain. The fair Speeches, the fine Promises with which he entertains his Votaries, sufficiently confirm it. He is ever inviting us to taste somewhat of the delightful Scene that passes by, and assures us we may do it safely; without any manner of Danger. What! not *that* Tree tempt you! at the same time very probably insinuating, that forbidden Fruit is always most palatable. Trifling Objections, such, for Instance, as incurring the Displeasure of the Almighty, forfeiting eternal Happiness, instead of it purchasing eternal Misery, *his* smooth Address can easily reconcile. *In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,* Gen. ii. 17.

SERM. is not expressive enough ; no, the  
 IX. Devil's Terms were of much greater  
 Weight. So intimate a Friend, one  
 that makes such hearty Invitations,  
 can never deceive. So that even  
 Satan himself, it seems, *when trans-*  
 2 Cor. xi. *formed into an Angel of Light,* was  
 14. unexceptionable. And an insincere,  
 deceitful Man, is Satan's most lively  
 Representative. In this particular  
 the Copy is almost as compleat as  
 the Original. Pity is it that Offen-  
 ders of this Size are not sooner de-  
 tected. When they are, when they  
 appear in their proper Colours (odi-  
 ous and detestable) *Verily I say un-*  
*to you, they have their Reward.*  
 And may they *always* receive the  
 just Reward of their Deeds. *When*  
 Psal. lviii. *they shoot their Arrows let them be*  
 6. *rooted out.* It's a good old Saying,  
*Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis ;*  
 if you say that I'm ungrateful, I defy  
 you to say any thing worse of me.  
 Now I affirm that a deceitful Man  
 must



must be guilty of Ingratitude. It SERM. IX.  
 is so necessary an Ingredient that  
 without it he cannot carry on his  
 Designs. In order to proceed un-  
 suspected, he is, and must be, ready  
 to *receive* Favours. The particular  
 way in which he *returns* those Fa-  
 vours sufficiently proves the Charge  
 laid against him. I look upon such  
 a Person as a very valuable Friend;  
 I use him as such; embrace every  
 Opportunity of serving him; and, in  
 an Extremity, to promote *his* Inte-  
 rest, would in a great Measure sa-  
 crifice my *own*. I all the while  
 imagine, that, should there be Oc-  
 casion, he would do as much for  
*me*. Vindicate my Character if  
 maliciously aspers'd; study *my* Wel-  
 fare as much as his own; and in  
 short, I am fully persuaded that our  
 Friendship is mutual. Instead of  
 this, I find I have not so great, so  
 inveterate an Enemy. All he said  
 was entirely false; *his Words seemed*  
*smoother*

SERM. *smoother than Oil, but yet were they*

IX.

*very Swords; the Poison of Asps*  
 Pfal. iv. 22 *was under his Lips.* Base Dissimu-

Rom. iii.

13.

lation screened his dark Thoughts, and to public View set a specious Face of Innocence and Beauty.---

It has been observ'd of the Brave, that *just are their Thoughts, and open are their Tempers*; freely, without Disguise, they like or dislike; "still are they found in the fair Face of Day; and Heaven and Men are Judges of their Actions."

Whereas, Dissemblers are compos'd of nothing but Cowardice, Treachery, and all that's bad. And when a Man has once forfeited the Reputation of his Sincerity, he is set fast; and nothing will then serve his Turn, neither Truth nor Falshood. Indeed, if a Man were only to live in the World for a *Day*, and should never have occasion to converse *more* with Mankind, never *more* need their good Opinion or  
 good

“ good Word \*, it were then no great SERM.  
IX.  
 “ matter (as to the Concerns of *This* }  
 “ World, I mean,) if he spent his  
 “ Reputation all at once, and ven-  
 “ tur’d it at one Throw. But, if  
 “ he is to *continue* in the World,  
 “ and would have the Advantage of  
 “ *Conversation* whilst he is in it, let  
 “ him make use of Truth and Since-  
 “ rity, in all his Words and Actions ;  
 “ for nothing but *This* will last and  
 “ hold out to the End. All other  
 “ Arts will fail ; but Truth and In-  
 “ tegrity will carry a Man *through*,  
 “ and bear him out to the *last*. Add  
 “ to this, that Sincerity is the most  
 “ compendious Wisdom ; it creates  
 “ Confidence in those whom we have  
 “ to deal with ; saves the Labour of  
 “ many Enquiries ; and brings them  
 “ to an Issue in a few Words. ’Tis  
 “ like travelling in a plain, beaten  
 “ Road ; which commonly brings a  
 “ Man sooner to his Journey’s End  
 “ than *By-ways*, in which Men often  
 P “ lose

\* SPECTATOR, Vol. V. N<sup>o</sup> 352.



SERM.

IX.

“lose themselves. In a word, what-  
 “ever Convenience may be thought  
 “to be in Falshood and Diffimula-  
 “tion, it is soon over; but the In-  
 “convenience of it is perpetual; be-  
 “cause it brings a Man under an  
 “everlasting Jealousy and Suspicion;  
 “so that he isn’t believ’d even when  
 “he speaks Truth, nor trusted, when  
 “perhaps he means honestly.”

Of the many good Qualities that  
 are to meet in the Man who is to  
*dwell in God’s Tabernacle, and to*  
*rest upon his holy Hill*; this is one,  
 that *He has used no Deceit in his*  
*Tongue, but that He has spoken the*  
*Truth from his Heart*: And he  
 “that speaks sincerely from his Heart,  
 “is a true Man \*, tho’ what he *speaks*  
 “should *not* be true. In this Case,  
 “’tis sufficient for us to speak as we  
 “*think*, only we should take care to  
 “*think before we speak*. But not  
 “only our *Honour*, but our *Interest*  
 “likewise engages us to be sincere;  
 “to

Psal.  
 v. 2, 3.

\* Bp HICKMAN’S Sermons, Vol. I. Sermon. xiii.

“ to profess the Truth, and nothing  
“ but the Truth ; and make *That*  
“ the only Standard both of our  
“ Words and Actions. Without this,  
“ there’s no Commerce, no Commu-  
“ nication to be had ; but the whole  
“ World would become a Wilder-  
“ ness, and Man the most dangerous  
“ Beast of Prey. In such Circum-  
“ stances, Society is but a Snare ;  
“ and Banishment would not be our  
“ *Condemnation*, but our *Choice* ; our  
“ only Refuge against a faithless Set  
“ of Men, who neither act as they  
“ speak, nor speak as they think.

“ Of all human Blessings there is  
“ hardly one more useful, more de-  
“ lightful to Mankind, than Friend-  
“ ship ; ’tis the Ornament of our  
“ Prosperity, and our Comfort in  
“ Distress : ’Tis a Guide to us in all  
“ our Difficulties, and a Companion  
“ in all our Ways ; a kindly Relish  
“ to all our Enjoyments, and a Relief  
“ to all our Wants. But without Sin-

SERM.

IX.

"cerity, all these Conveniencies fall  
 "to the Ground, like a tottering  
 "House without a Foundation. For,  
 "where Virtue and Truth are want-  
 "ing, there's no Ground to build a  
 "Friendship, a Confidence upon;  
 "there's no trusting to such a Man's  
 "Assistance, no depending upon his  
 "Advice; but with all his flatter-  
 "ing Speeches and fine Promises,  
 "he only designs to draw us in more  
 "effectually, to ruin us more com-  
 "pletely. Such a false feigned  
 "Complaisance is more dangerous  
 "than an open, downright Defiance,  
 "as a Spy is more dangerous than  
 "a profest Enemy; for the Enemy  
 "gives Warning before he strikes,  
 "and bids us prepare for our De-  
 "fence, (and it's our own Fault if  
 "we don't) but the Spy comes with  
 "Artifice and Subtilty to circumvent  
 "us; with fair Pretences (like the  
 Chap. vii "Harlot in the *Proverbs*) he insen-  
 "sibly gains upon us, and then, like  
 "her, gives the fatal, the unavoidable  
 "Wound.



“ Wound. With Words as sweet  
“ as Honey, and as soft as Oil, he  
“ sooths us into our Ruin; and be-  
“ trays us with a Countenance smil-  
“ ing as Heaven, but false as Hell.

SERM.

IX.

“ I remember to have read, that  
“ an antient Comædian gave this  
“ Character of a fawning Parasite;  
“ *Ais? aio, negas? nego*: Do you  
“ affirm a thing? so do *I*; do you  
“ deny it; so do *I*: And *that* so  
“ dexterously, that he could affirm  
“ and deny the same thing in the  
“ same Breath. But This, I must  
“ observe, was look'd upon as ex-  
“ tremely scandalous and contempti-  
“ ble in those generous Heathen times.

But further --- It is reported of  
the Syrens, so exquisitely charming  
was their Voice, that by this means  
they tempted Passengers to shore,  
and there robb'd and kill'd them.  
The Comparison is strong and live-  
ly; much after this manner are we  
dealt with by base, perfidious Men.

SERM. We should observe the same Me-  
 IX. thod with *these*, that *Ulysses* did  
 with *them*. Being obliged to sail

Acts  
 xxvii. 44.

that way, by the Direction of *Circe*  
 he stopp'd his Companions Ears  
 with Wax that they might not  
 hear, and he himself was tied to  
 the Topmast, that he might not  
 stir: *And so it came to pass that*  
*they escaped all safe to Land.* --

Thus should we refuse to hear the  
 Voice of these deluding Charmers,  
*charm they never so sweetly.* It is,  
 I allow, a dangerous Sphere to act  
 in, and a very difficult Matter to  
 be sufficiently aware of 'em. The  
 nicest Prudence is requisite, the  
 greatest Precaution absolutely ne-  
 cessary. A *common* Shade is not a  
 Shelter against *these* Attacks, nor  
 in this Case is even the House of  
 God itself an Asylum, a Place of  
 Refuge. *David* thought, and thought  
 very right too, that if he could be  
 any where safe, it must be there.

But

But *Ahitophel* was as busy, as active, SERM. IX.  
as vigilant, as industrious in his  
Designs *there*, as in any other Place  
whatever. Thus did his own *fa-*  
*miliar Friend whom he trusted, he* Pfal. xli. 9.  
*that did eat of his Bread, lay great*  
*wait for him.* In the whole con-  
tinued Series of Misfortunes, in all  
the repeated Instances of Distress,  
thro' which *St Paul* past, nothing  
seem'd so very hard, nothing made  
him so very uneasy, as the un-  
kind Usage he met with from Those  
to whom he had been the truest  
and best Friend. *The Perils he was* 2 Cor. ii. 26.  
*in from false Brethren,* the ill Re-  
turns of his Ministry, even from  
those who were converted by it,  
he very justly reckon'd as the most  
sensible Part of his Afflictions. —  
Bad Treatment indeed he every  
where met with. Whereever he  
went, Stripes and Imprisonment  
were his Reception from the Ma-  
gistrate, and Scorn and Outrage



SERM. from the People. This he seems  
 IX. but little to regard; this he judges,  
 comparatively, inconsiderable. The  
 Malice, not of his *real Enemies*,  
 but of his *false Friends*, he most  
 complains of. And is not this suf-  
 ficient? Does not this Example  
 indisputably prove the horrid Na-  
 ture of a fallacious, dissembling In-  
 sincerity? If not, behold a Great-  
 er, the Greatest of All, is here :  
 Our blessed Lord himself took par-  
 ticular notice of the particular *man-  
 ner* in which He was betrayed.  
*Judas, betrayest thou the Son of*  
*Man with a Kiss?* Is it thus  
 thou understandest That of the  
 Psalmist, *Kiss the Son, lest He be*  
*angry?* Dost thou think that this  
 will avert mine Anger? Thy Crime  
 is very much heighten'd by the  
 extraordinary and uncommon man-  
 ner in which it is brought about.  
 Reflect upon the Villainy thou hast  
 been guilty of. Thou wast one of

Luke  
 xxii. 48.

Psal. ii. 12.

a superior Order, not a common Disciple, but one of the Twelve. SERM.  
IX.

A very great Trust I reposed in thee, a very great Honour I conferred upon thee. Is *this* the Return? *this* thy generous Friendship? *Better would it have been for thee if thou hadst never been born.* This must be the Devil's Suggestion; He alone could point out to thee such a base, such a diabolical Practice.

Having thus far stated the horrid Nature of this Crime in itself, I proceed to shew, *Secondly*, how odious it renders us consider'd as Men; or, in other Words, how highly it reflects upon the Dignity of our Nature.

Did not Experience too plainly convince us of the Truth of it, we should hardly believe that any Man of a common Make, endued with Sense and Reason, capable of  
Delibe-

SERM.

IX.

thus offend, thus act in direct Contradiction to the very End of his Being. Man was intended to be Sociable; form'd for Society; but this destroys the very Notion of Society. Where Men are influenc'd by this Principle, all social Harmony must cease of Course; all Union be rendred impracticable; and the very Nature of a Constitution subverted. For, when Affairs are thus happily situated that we can't believe a Word we hear; that the more a Person professes Friendship, the greater Reason we have to suspect him, how can we ever be sufficiently on our Guard? Conversation, in the Nature of Things, thus enliven'd, must necessarily be very entertaining; Commerce, thus regulated, very advantageous. The natural Frame and Temper of our Minds is good; the Materials of which we are formed, worthy the Great

Great Author and Contriver of 'em. SERM.  
IX.  
The Knowledge of Good and Evil implanted in us, is every way sufficient, when duly cultivated and improv'd. Nay, in this Case, Nature *un*-improv'd, even natural Instinct, will dictate thus far, that we should do as we would be done by, and that if we profess ourselves Friends, we should in every Particular act as such. That we think the Reverse of this very unnatural, is plain from the general Abhorrence and Detestation it meets with. We can even *love* an open Enemy, entertain at least a good Opinion of him, and applaud his generous Dislike. He behaves so much like a Man of Honour, gives us such fair Play, that tho' we cannot be *for* him, we don't care to be much *against* him. How very differently do we treat one of the opposite Character, a false Friend? We place him, (the only Place he has a Right to)



SERM.

IX.

to) in the lowest and most contemptible Class; among the basest and most despicable Set of Creatures. He has nothing of a Man in him; nothing but the outward Form to entitle him to the Name. Sentiments of Humanity he has long ago forgot, these he is wholly unacquainted with. In short, the Animal may survive, but the Man scarcely exists. *We* place him, did I just now say? See where the Psalmist, who was a very excellent Judge of Mankind, see where *He* has plac'd him; who, speaking of Those whom *the Lord will abhor*, at the same Time that he mentions the *Blood-thirsty Man*, (not only a most infamous, but a most frightful Character,) joins with him, as a proper Companion, the *deceitful* one. The former takes a Man's Life away, which is very bad; the latter his Reputation, which, in the Opinion of many, is still worse.—

Psal. v. 6.

This

This is a degenerate Species, not worthy our Notice. But from these Causes have sprung many melancholy Effects. What Seeds of Discord have been sown, what Jealousies occasion'd, what Animosities heighten'd, by the vile Suggestions, the secret Insinuations of these worthless Creatures? How many Families, from the strictest Friends, have been made the most irreconcilable Enemies? *False Witnesses* rise up, raise Stories without the least Foundation, particularly careful to have 'em safely deliver'd.—

SERM.  
IX.

What aggravates this Crime is the *manner* of it. Indeed we know we are injur'd, but we know not by whom. We have already observ'd that it's generally by Those whom we have the least Reason to suspect. For, Men of this Turn, and this Complexion, are, for the most part, very complaisant, mighty obliging; in Appearance the very Reverse

SERM. verſe of what they are in Reality.

IX.

The many Professions of Kindneſs and Service, which they are ready enough to *make*, are only (if I may ſo call it) a kind of *Proſtitution* of Speech, ſeldom intended to mean any *part* of what they expreſs, never to mean *all* they expreſs. --- But let us leave ſuch Wretches as theſe (for it is very certain that the leſs we have to do with 'em the better) let us leave 'em to Themſelves, (the only Company they are fit for;) let us rather enter upon a much more agreeable Subject, and expoſe *their Vice* by recommending its oppoſite *Virtue*, *that* Simplicity and godly Sincerity, which alone can make us agreeable either to God, to ourſelves, or to others. Now it was *Plato's* \* Opinion long ago, “ That “ there was nothing ſo delightful “ as the hearing or ſpeaking Truth. “ And

\* SPECTATOR, Vol. VIII. N<sup>o</sup> 557.

“ And it is for this Reason, that SERM.  
“ there is no Conversation so en- IX.  
“ gaging as that of the Man of  
“ Integrity; who hears without any  
“ Intention to betray, and speaks  
“ without any the least Design to  
“ deceive.” Among the many Sto-  
ries told us of *Cato*, I cannot re-  
collect one that more redounds to  
his Honour, or can give us a live-  
lier Idæa of his Integrity, than the  
following. “ An Advocate was  
“ pleading a Cause in a Court of  
“ Judicature, where the State of  
“ the Case was such that the Law  
“ requir’d *two* Witnesses. The Ad-  
“ vocate had produc’d *one*, an ex-  
“ ceeding good one, and strictly  
“ unexceptionable. He humbly  
“ hoped, that tho’ he had but one,  
“ yet as that one was such an ex-  
“ traordinary good one, he might  
“ be admitted. The Judge told  
“ him, that where the Law re-  
“ quir’d *two* Witnesses, he could  
“ not



SERM. "not accept of *one* only, tho' it  
 IX. "were *Cato*." — He could not  
 have said more, nor could *Cato*  
 himself deserve more.

What a Character was that of  
*Nathanael*, and from the Mouth  
 of our Blessed Saviour himself too;  
 John i. 47. *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom*  
*is no Guile.* "Here was a glo-  
 "rious Instance of Sincerity, upon  
 "which our Saviour bestowed a  
 "most remarkable, affectionate  
 "Commendation. And surely, Sin-  
 "cerity is a most excellent Vir-  
 "tue, a most eminent Grace, and  
 "a truly great Accomplishment."  
 As a Confirmation of this, only  
 look into the Definition of it. —  
 "And a Man of Sincerity (says a  
 "very ingenious \* Writer) is one  
 "that makes a plain, open and  
 "constant Declaration of the Truth;  
 "whose Professions are always  
 "agreeable to his Purposes; and  
 "his

\* Bp HICKMAN as before.

“ his Heart and Tongue always go SERM.  
IX.  
 “ together. One that uses no Dis-  
 “ guise in his Actions, no Deceit  
 “ in his Words, but whatever Signs  
 “ he makes to express his Mind *by*,  
 “ they are exactly suited to the  
 “ Thing signified.” And therefore  
 Sincerity is the very same Virtue  
 which in other Terms we call Sim-  
 plicity of Mind ; “ A Quality,  
 “ which, however unfashionable it  
 “ may be in these polite Times,  
 “ how much soever despis’d, is  
 “ yet highly recommended to us  
 “ in the Word of God, as the dis-  
 “ tinguishing Character, and pecu-  
 “ liar Temper of the Gospel.” ---  
 And we cannot but observe, that  
 when our Saviour commands his  
 Disciples to be *wise as Serpents*,  
 He at the same Time strictly char-  
 ges ’em to be *harmless as Doves* ; Matt.  
x. 16.  
 and accordingly, we are inform’d,  
 that in Obedience to that Com-  
 mand, they *did eat their Meat*, as  

Q

indeed

SERM. IX. indeed we have great reason to believe they did every thing else, in singleness of Heart. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity, says St Paul; and in another Place, *We are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God, but as of SINCERITY, but as of God, in the Sight of God, speak we in Christ. For our Rejoicing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World.* There is nothing more engaging than this honest Simplicity, this downright Sincerity; nothing meets with a more general Approbation and Esteem, nor is any Virtue more its own Reward. *Every Man is a Friend to him that gives a friendly Answer with Meekness.* — In Solomon's Phrase, *the Softness of*

Acts  
ii. 46.  
Eph.  
vi. 24.

2 Cor.  
ii. 17.

2 Cor.  
i. 12.

Ecclus.  
iv. 8.

of his Tongue breaketh the Bone, SERM. IX.  
and every Man kisseth his Lips.

“ A Person \* of true Goodness, of Prov. xxv. 15. Chap. xxiv. 26.  
“ known Sincerity, tho’ otherwise  
“ of small Accomplishments, will  
“ always make an amiable Figure  
“ in Society, and be a valuable  
“ Part of it; whereas, without a  
“ virtuous Heart, a good Inten-  
“ tion, the superior Abilities of the  
“ designing Man will only render  
“ him a more extensive Mischief;  
“ and the deceitful Agreeableness  
“ of the gay Man, qualify him to  
“ mislead, betray, and ruin, only  
“ more entirely, those he conver-  
“ ses with.” And I’ll conclude  
with observing, that the Serpent,  
(which was the Devil,) was more  
*subtil*, more cunning, more mis-  
chievous, *than any Beast of the* Gen. iii. 1.

Q 2

Field

\* Archbishop of Canterbury’s Sermon (when Rec-  
tor of St James’s) before the University of Oxford  
on *Act-Sunday*, 8th July, 1733. Pag. 9.



SERM. *Field which the Lord God had*  
 IX. *made.*

Now unto Him who *requires*  
*Truth in the inward Parts, and*  
*who is of purer Eyes than to be-*  
*hold Iniquity,* tho' never so much  
 disguis'd; to the adorable God,  
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be  
 ascrib'd, as is most strictly due,  
 all possible Glory, and Honour,  
 and Praise, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*



10 EE 60

SERMON



## S E R M O N X.

Religion and Virtue, in general, very  
closely connected, but not strictly  
inseparable.

*Pietâte sublatâ, Fides etiam, & Societas Humani ge-  
neris, & unâ excellentissima Virtus Justitia tollitur.*  
CIC. de Nat. Deorum.

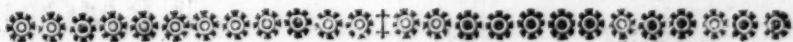
*Summum Bonum est quod honestum est, & quod magis  
admirere, solum bonum est quod honestum est.*  
SENECA.

ΤΕΛΕΣΤΙΝΟΣ ὁμοίωσις Θεῶ.

P Y T H.

I shall endeavour to make it out by plain Reason,  
that the Happiness of our Condition, in all re-  
spects, does depend upon Religion; and That,  
not only *morally* upon account of that Reward  
which virtuous Actions do entitle a Man unto,  
from a just and wise Providence; but *naturally*  
also, by reason of that *Physical* Efficacy which the  
Duties of Religion have to procure for us all  
those Things wherein our temporal Happiness  
consists; to promote the Welfare, not only of  
particular Persons, but of public Communities of  
Mankind in general, and of the whole Universe.

Bp WILKINS's *Natural Religion*.



SERMON X.

Beligion and Virtue, in general, very  
closely connected, and inseparably  
united.



Beligion, indeed, is the foundation of  
all virtue, and the source of all  
true wisdom. It is the light that  
guides us through the darkness of  
this world, and the anchor that  
holds us fast to the eternal life.

It is not enough to have the  
letter of the law, but we must  
have the spirit of it. We must  
be inwardly renewed, and our  
hearts must be purified. We must  
be like unto Christ, who was  
the perfect law, the end of the  
law, and the life of the world.



PROVERBS III. 7.

*Fear the Lord, and depart from  
Evil.*

**I**T has been observ'd by a good SERM.  
X.  
Writer \*, provided he had been  
but a strictly orthodox one, that  
“ Religion and Virtue appear in  
“ many respects so nearly related,  
“ that they are generally presum'd  
“ inseparable Companions.”

I will endeavour, so far as my  
mean Abilities will give me Leave,  
to set this Matter right; at least, I  
will venture to give my humble  
Opinion in the Case. And in what  
I have further to offer, I shall ob-  
serve the following easy Method;  
*First* enquire, What *Virtue* is, con-  
sider'd

Q 4

\* Lord SHAFTESBURY'S *Characteristics*, Vol. II.  
Page 5.



SERM. fider'd independently, and as dif-  
X. tinct from *Religion*; and then,  
Secondly, What, when connect-  
ed with *It*.

I am *First* to enquire, What  
Virtue is, confider'd independently,  
and as diftinct from Religion.

And I believe we may fafely  
venture to fay as much as this,  
that the Man poffefft of this ami-  
able and commendable Quality,  
this great and good Principle, muft  
be fuch a one, as out of a true  
Love to Virtue, and an equal Ab-  
horrence of Vice, is carried, by no  
means fecondarily and accidentally,  
but primarily and immediately, to  
That which is Good, and from  
every thing which fo much as *ap-  
pears* to be Evil; the very *Appear-  
ance of Evil* is fufficient. In order  
to make a compleat Figure, and  
to answer the Character of a truly  
and ftrictly virtuous Man, he muft  
fet

set up Reason for his governing Principle, keep all his Appetites and Passions in a constant and regular Subordination to it; and must likewise be particularly careful, in all Cases, at all Times, and under all Circumstances, to keep this always pure, unbiass'd, and uncorrupted. Nothing must be allowed to influence him, but what Reason so far approves of as to give a Sanction to; *that* he is to judge right, which can stand the Test of an impartial, thorough Examination; *that* he must of necessity allow to be wrong, which *will* not, or rather *cannot*, keep its Ground, when call'd upon for a plain and decisive Proof.

It is absolutely necessary to keep up Virtue to its proper Pitch, to its fix'd Standard, that Things should be consider'd just as they are in *themselves*, not as we would be glad to have them with relation to

*us,*

SERM.

X.

SERM.

X.

*us*, (for this will be found to be the Result of Prejudice;) whereas *here* must be no Partiality; Reason, free from Prejudice, is here to sit as sole Judge; first, carefully and cautiously to weigh each Circumstance, and then to proceed to a fair and impartial Determination. Whatsoever, or, with regard to *Man*, *whosoever*, in point of Virtue is less than This, cannot deserve, and consequently, can by no means reasonably claim a Right to, the noble Character of a virtuous Man.

The more any one is naturally inclin'd to any particular Vice, the still greater Opportunity he has, for this very Reason, not only of *exerting*, but at the same time, of *improving* his Virtue. For, strictly speaking, there can be no Virtue where there is no Temptation to Vice; nor can any Man's Virtue properly be said to be in danger, in any Case, or at any Time, but when

a vicious Object, by a strong At-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
tack, makes a fair and proper Trial<sup>X.</sup>  
of it. Thus, (and here I agree  
with the before quoted noble Au-  
thor,) if any one is naturally of a  
passionate, or an amorous Disposi-  
tion, and yet resists these Passions;  
and, notwithstanding the Force of  
their Impressions, adheres to Vir-  
tue; if the passionate Man volun-  
tarily *bears*, or the amorous one  
*refrains*, so that neither a cruel,  
hasty Action is committed by the  
one, nor an immodest, indecent  
one by the other; in these Cir-  
cumstances it would be but natu-  
ral for us to applaud these Virtues  
above what we should otherwise do,  
were they free of this Tempta-  
tion, and from these Propensities.  
And I can further agree with him,  
that *a Propensity to Vice is no In-  
gredient in Virtue*; yet I must  
take the Liberty to add, (and in  
that Particular a little to dissent from  
Him,)



SERM. Him,) that it may make the virtuous character much more compleat and considerable, than it would have been without it. I am very sensible that this, at first View, may seem somewhat odd, that a Man's being inclin'd to be vicious, should be a means of his becoming more virtuous; that a Propensity to *Vice* should be a Help to *Virtue*; and yet, I think, in some measure, it most certainly is, and has already appear'd to be. Let a Man have ever so good natural Inclinations; suppose him to have so far commenc'd Philosopher, as to be indifferent to all that passes; to all outward Occurrences; let nothing happen to molest, to discompose, or ruffle him, and then, I would beg to know, where is his *Virtue*? In this Situation, what Possibility has he, or can he have, of giving a proper Proof of it? Herein, I allow, his  
*Prudence*

*Prudence* may appear, and very visibly display itself; but I think his *Virtue* cannot, as That is suppos'd to signify a resolute Resistance of Temptation. *Adam*, in all Probability, would never have thought of the Apple, if he had not been, on the one hand, strictly enjoin'd *not* to eat it; as, on the other, powerfully solicited *to* eat it. This made it the Touchstone or Trial of his *Virtue*, and was therefore particularly intended for a particular Proof of his *Obedience* or *Disobedience* to the Command of his Maker.

SERM.  
X.

In like manner, place any one in the delightful *Garden of Eden*, that is, give him an Opportunity of indulging himself in every thing he has a particular Inclination to; Let the ambitious Man enlarge his Prospect, and take a full View of *all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them*; Let any one, naturally

Matt. iv. 8.

SERM.

X.

naturally of a luxurious Constitution, so far abound in Ease and Plenty, as to have frequent Opportunities of Eating and Drinking, and, as *He* thinks at least, of *enjoying* himself: In short, let nothing be wanting that is either  
 Gen. ii. 9. *pleasant to the Sight, or good for Food*; and if, even under these trying Circumstances, their Virtue still stands firm and unshaken; if they are determin'd at all Events to *hold* it *fast*, and by  
 Job xxvii. 6. no means to *let it go*, then may we fairly pronounce of them that they are strictly virtuous. --- Whereas, was not this the Case, nothing more could be said, than that they might indeed be virtuous, so far, as that they had not an Opportunity of being otherwise.

Virtue, like the Voice of Nature, is unalterably fix'd, and absolutely independent; and it is as impossible for a Man to act immorally,

morally, and yet to retain his Vir- SERM.  
X.  
tue, as it would be for him to be  
guilty of the greatest Act of Cru-  
elty, and at the same time main-  
tain the Character of a compassio-  
nate Being. Nothing can be strict-  
ly virtuous, but what is every way  
consistent with, and agreeable to,  
the standing Rules of Virtue; what-  
ever in any degree deviates from it,  
is, proportionably to that degree,  
repugnant to it. 'Tis in every  
Person's Power *to refuse the Evil,* Isa vii. 15.  
*and to choose the Good;* the Mind  
of Man being naturally so form'd,  
as, with the Advantages of a pro-  
per Education, to discern between  
the one and the other. And the  
Wisdom as well as Goodness of the  
Great Author of Nature herein  
abundantly shews itself, whenever  
we reflect upon the natural Make  
and Frame of our Minds, the par-  
ticular Bent and Tendency of our  
Inclinations. If nothing had been  
enjoin'd,



SERM.

X.

enjoin'd, or if nothing had been prohibited, then (as has been observ'd,) nothing could have been meritorious; there would then have been no room left for Merit; nothing would have been consider'd as *proper*, but what was at the same time *palatable*. So that to suppose a State of Nature, wherein there was no Good or Evil, nothing just or unjust, but an infinite Right to *all* Things, is to suppose a Time, when there was no moral Rectitude in the Divine Nature; no Providence; nothing becoming, either God or Man, in their respective Relations. For, where there is a Right to every Thing, there is no Law; and consequently no Sin; *for Sin is the Transgression of a Law*; and were no Law written in the Heart, there would be no Grounds for an *accusing* or *excusing* Conscience; which would be entirely to exclude, or at least to

1 John  
iii. 4.

*not strictly inseparable.*

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to confound, the very Notions of SERM.  
X.  
Right and Wrong. For thus, Vir-  
tue and Vice would be the self-same  
thing; there would be nothing com-  
mendable in the one, nor any thing  
bad in the Commission of the other.  
The bare Supposition of which would  
be monstrously absurd, and directly  
contrary to the immutable and eter-  
nal Differences and Relations of  
Things. Vice may be *patroniz'd*,  
but it can never be *authoriz'd*;  
wicked Men perhaps might be glad,  
and they certainly *would*, was there  
really no manner of Difference or  
Distinction between them; between  
Virtue and Vice. They might *wish*  
this was the Case. But it is *not* the  
Case. As Virtue is good in itself,  
it will for ever continue to be so;  
and will always be found to consist  
in a just, proper, and upright Con-  
duct; in a moral Rectitude, and  
Fitness of Action. And this, I ap-  
prehend, may be a full Proof of our

R

first

SERM.

X.

first Point, or a full Answer to our first Enquiry, what Virtue is considered independently, and as distinct from Religion. I proceed, in the second Place, to shew in what manner it is connected with it.

It has been asked, *Whether an Atheist can possibly be a virtuous Man, or share any real Degree of Honesty or Merit?* It may be very improving to consider this Point, and it seems very apposite to our present Purpose to allow it a full Consideration.

We sometimes meet with Men, who seem to have little, or no Regard at all to Religion, or at the best entertain but very mean, imperfect, and unworthy Notions of it, and yet are observ'd steadily to adhere to the strictest Rules of Justice between Man and Man; who would not do an ungenerous Action upon any Motives whatever, or be guilty of

of an unjust one, though upon the SERM.  
X. most promising Prospect of reaping the greatest Advantage from it.

That these are Men of Honour, nay, further, consider'd as Members of Society, in a civil and political Capacity, that they may likewise be very considerable Contributors to the Support and Welfare of it, I very readily allow; but that they are *virtuous*, or Men of strict Merit, will not be so readily granted. Let it ever be remembered, that, to the Performance of any thing meritorious (if any thing whatever can be properly so stil'd,) it is absolutely necessary that the Means should be justifiable, and the End lawful. Whatever in either of these Respects is deficient; if the Means us'd cannot be justified, if the End propos'd cannot be vindicated, then, let the Performance be what it will, it must necessarily be not only incompleat and imperfect, but it must likewise



SERM. have in it the Nature of Sin. *What-*

X. *soever we do, we are requir'd to do*  
 1 Cor. x. *all to the Glory of God*; that is, or  
 31.

at least ought to be, the first Spring, as well as the ultimate End, of all our Actions; not only the Good and Welfare of our Fellow-Christians, but God's Glory too, is in all things to be consider'd. No Man, without a due and proper Sense of Religion, can propose this as the End of what he does; therefore, no Man, but upon a religious Principle, can make, either himself, or any thing he shall think fit to do, acceptable in the Sight of God. 'Tis *the Fear*

Prov. ix.  
10.

*of the Lord which is the Beginning of Wisdom*, and to have right Apprehensions of the Deity is a very essential Part of Religion. And they who pretend to be virtuous without taking Religion into their Schemes, seem, at least in Point of Interest, to have made but a very indifferent Choice. For, unless Virtue be its

OWN

*not strictly inseparable.*

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own Reward, they can reasonably SERM. X.  
expect no Reward at all.—*Without* Heb. xi. 6.  
*Faith it is impossible to please God;*  
*for he that cometh to God, must be-*  
*lieve that He is, and that He is a*  
*Rewarder of them that diligently*  
*seek Him. We can do nothing a-* 2 Cor. xiii. 8.  
*gainst the Truth, but for the Truth.*

We can do nothing properly, and  
as it ought to be done, without a  
firm Reliance upon the divine Good-  
ness; without a lively Faith in God's  
Mercy thro' Christ. Virtue ceases  
to be Virtue when misapplied; and  
Religion is vain without a proper  
Object for the Exercise of it. Men  
of a refin'd Way of Thinking, may  
be witty upon Religion, but, *with-*  
*out Religion, it must necessarily be*  
*at their own Expence. Christ cru-*  
*cified may be, as He really was to*  
*the Jews, a stumbling Block, and to*  
*the Greeks Foolishness, but to them*  
*that believe, He always was, and*  
*always will be, the Power of God,* 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

SERM.  
X.

*and the Wisdom of God.* Fine Parts and great Abilities are, undoubtedly, in themselves, very great and noble Accomplishments; but, when improperly directed, they may likewise be very great Evils. To read, and to be able to digest, whole Volumes of Philosophy, and yet to be ignorant in the One most necessary Point of Knowledge, is not only an Aggravation of Guilt, (for that it certainly is,) but it is likewise the highest Instance of downright Folly. For, this is a Study, which, in reality, and in the End, will profit us little or nothing; this is a Knowledge *which will vanish away*; which may perhaps amuse, but cannot much improve; which may serve to make us something wiser, as to worldly Wisdom, but very little better, perhaps a great deal worse; whereas, strictly speaking, to be *wise is to be wise for ourselves*; and the only way to be truly wise for ourselves is to be *wise*.

1 Cor.  
xiii. 8.

Prov. ix.  
12.



*not strictly inseparable.*

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*wise unto Salvation.* Thus the *best* SERM. X.  
Man will always be found to be the *wisest* Man, and he, who has the 2 Tim. iii. 15.  
greatest Share of *Religion*, will, in  
all Probability, have the greatest  
Share of *Virtue* too. He that is  
acquainted with Religion, needs no  
other Acquaintance; he who knows  
nothing of Religion, knows nothing  
of himself; does not study his only  
true and real Interest; does not re-  
gard his only solid and substantial  
Happiness. *With* Religion a Man  
may be happy; he can hardly be  
otherwise; *without* it, though pos-  
sess'd of every Thing else, I think  
he must necessarily be miserable.  
From whence I conclude, that every  
Man's Happiness is in his own Power;  
he that *will* be, *may* be Happy; he  
that *chooses* to be miserable, *ought*  
to be so. Thus Virtue, under the  
Guidance of Religion, seems to be  
the greatest Good any one can de-  
fire, and Vice the greatest Evil any



SERM. one can desire to avoid. And if

X.

this be the Case, as it most certainly is, then I think we may infer, as a fair, rational, and undeniable Consequence, that the sooner we are acquainted with so desirable an Acquaintance as Virtue, the better. Convinc'd of this, if you are so happy as to be convinc'd of it, *suffer* a *Word* or two of *Exhortation*, and I have done.

Heb. xiii.  
22.

Let me then most earnestly, most affectionately, recommend it to you, to all of you who have it in your Power, to *give your Hearts early to the Lord that made you*; and don't think of becoming *new Men*, when you are ceasing *to be*; of *reforming your Lives* when you are *ending* them. This is beginning quite at the wrong End; and God will not accept the Devil's Refuse. No; this is a sure Way, if you live long enough, to *bring down your gray Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave*.

Eccles.  
xxxix. 5.

Gen xlii.  
38.

Instead

*not strictly inseparable.*

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Instead of this, *Fear the Lord, and depart from Evil*; in other Words, be wise, and be happy. Devotion must not be a Work of *Necessity*, but of *Choice*. 'Tis our Free-will Offering that God expects; and He expects it too, from the Prime of our Flocks, the Richest of all our Treasures. In whatever then you propose to yourselves, consider the *End*; in whatever you undertake, have the Glory of God always in view, and you can never do amiss; the Effect will be, He will *guide you with his Counsel, and after that receive you with Glory*; but if, on the other Hand, thro' any wrong Suggestions, any groundless Prejudices, false, tho' fashionable, Notions, you neglect or forget God, the Time will come when you will be obliged to remember Him, only to your Sorrow. There is nothing in this World, I mean as to the Pleasures and Enjoyments of it, by  
any

SERM.  
X.

Psal. lxxiii.

23.

SERM.  
X.

any Means worthy the Care and Attention of a wise and good Man. *Solomon*, who perhaps knew as much of it, as almost any one that ever liv'd in it, comprizes the Sum and Substance of the whole in a very few Words 'tis true, but they are very significant and remarkable ones, *Vanity* and *Vexation*. And at what Rate would you prize *Vanity*, which is nothing, and *Vexation*, which is worse than nothing? To expect any real or solid Comfort from human Means, is to seek the Living among the Dead. Happiness here below is visionary; but the Happiness which cometh from God, is, like God himself, eternal in the Heavens. Other Foundation can no Man lay than is laid. He that builds upon other Principles, builds upon Sand; without any Foundation at all. And what shall be done in the End thereof? The House must fall, and great will be the Fall of it.

1 Cor. iii.  
11.

Jer. v. 31.

Matt. vii.  
27.



*not strictly inseparable.*

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*it.* Let us then thus reason with SERM. X.  
the Psalmist, *Who will shew us any*  
*Good? Lord, lift thou up the Light* Psal. iv. 6, 7.  
*of thy Countenance upon us.* Saint  
Peter's Question, and his Answer  
to it, will set every thing right:  
*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou* John vi. 68.  
*hast the Words of eternal Life.* Be  
it then our highest Ambition to a-  
spire after every thing that is truly  
good. Sow Virtue, and Content  
and Happiness will be the Fruit.  
'Tis true indeed, the World we are  
engag'd with, lays many Tempta-  
tions in our Way: *The Lust of the* 1 John ii. 16.  
*Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the*  
*Pride of Life, is not of the Father,*  
*but is of the World.* The last of  
these seduces many; the second  
more; and the first perhaps most of  
all. But surely we must be wretch-  
edly wanting to ourselves; strangely  
off our Guard, if we suffer Things,  
so trifling in their Nature, and of so  
short a Continuance too, as the very  
highest



SERM.

X.

highest of these are, to endanger a Salvation which Words cannot describe, nor our present most enlarg'd Capacities comprehend; immense in Degree, infinite in Duration. So far indeed we are inform'd, that *we shall see God as He is*; and that when we see Him *we shall be like Him*; like Him in Holiness, and like Him in Happiness; that when *we awake up after his Likeness we shall be satisfied with it*; and that a Work which cannot be finish'd shall however be the Work of an Eternity. All this we know; but still *we know but in part*; our highest present Ideas are but very faint ones; the most exalted Notions we can possibly entertain, are vastly disproportionate, quite inadequate to their Object. Let us then, animated with such pleasing Hopes, such transporting Views, so glorious a Prospect, use our utmost Care and Diligence to *make our Calling and Election*

1 Cor.  
xiii. 9.

*Election sure ; so to pass through* SERM.  
*Things temporal, that we finally lose* X.  
*not the Things eternal. Let us sted-*  
*fastly look up to Heaven, and by*  
*Faith behold the Glory that shall be*  
*revealed. And may that great and*  
*good God, who has prepar'd for*  
*them that love Him such good Things*  
*as pass Man's Understanding, graft*  
*in our Hearts the Love of his Name ;*  
*increase in us true Religion ; nourish*  
*us with all Goodness ; and of his great*  
*Mercy keep us in the same ; that lov-*  
*ing Him above all Things, we may*  
*obtain his gracious Promises, which*  
*exceed all that we can desire, thro'*  
*Jesus Christ our Lord ; to whom,*  
*with the eternal Spirit, three Persons*  
*and one most glorious God, be Bless-*  
*ing and Honour, Thanksgiving and*  
*Praise, more than we can utter, more*  
*than we can conceive, from all An-*  
*gels, all Men, and all Creatures,*  
*World without End. Amen, and*  
*Amen.*

F I N I S.

Election us: so to pass through  
 Things, and that we finally lose  
 not the things eternal. Let us  
 just look up to Heaven, and be  
 Faith-ful to the Glory that shall be  
 revealed. And may that great and  
 good God, who has prepared for  
 them that love Him such good things  
 as his Man's Understanding grasp  
 in our Hearts the Love of his Name;  
 increase in us true Religion; never  
 without all increase; and of his great  
 Mercy keep us in the Love; that lov-  
 ing Him above all Things, we may  
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 ing and Honour, Thanksgiving and  
 Praise, more than all, more  
 than we can conceive from all An-  
 gels, all Men, and all Creatures,  
 World without End. Amen and

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